M.S.C.
HUTTON, EDWARD
A BOOK OF
17. NOV. 1973

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
LIBRARY SERVICE

Author

Title

BOOK STORE

Books or discs must be returned on or before the last date stamped on label or on card in book pocket. Books or discs can be renewed by telephone, letter or personal call unless required by another reader. After library hours use the Ansafone Service (01-698 7347). For hours of opening and charges see notices at the above branch, but note that all lending departments close at 1 pm on Wednesday and all libraries are closed on Sundays, Good Friday, Christmas Day, Bank Holidays and Saturdays prior to Bank Holidays.

METROPOLITAN
SPECIAL COLLECTION

A BOOK OF THE WYE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

FREDERIC MEDALE: A ROMANCE
STUDIES IN THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS
ITALY AND THE ITALIANS
THE CITIES OF UMBRIA
THE CITIES OF SPAIN
FLORENCE AND THE CITIES OF NORTHERN TUSCANY WITH GENOA
IN UNKNOWN TUSCANY
COUNTRY WALKS ABOUT FLORENCE
ROME
SIENA AND SOUTHERN TUSCANY
VENICE AND VENETIA
SIGISMONDO MALATESTA
GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO

942.4

A BOOK OF THE WYE

BY

EDWARD HUTTON

AUTHOR OF "THE CITIES OF UMBRIA," ETC.

METHUEN & CO. LTD.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

[1911]

~~G42 7.435~~
942.42
H2

218,584
C(R.S.)

MSC

942.4:386
HUT

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	TO WELSH WALES	19
III.	TO LLANGURIG	29
IV.	TO RHAYADER	43
V.	TO BUILTH	65
VI.	TO THE HAY	82
VII.	THE STORY OF HEREFORDSHIRE TO THE UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES	99
VIII.	TO HEREFORD	116
IX.	THE STORY OF HEREFORD	137
X.	HEREFORD CATHEDRAL	156
XI.	ON BOATING ON THE WYE, AND THE WAY TO ROSS	185
XII.	ROSS	204
XIII.	TO MONMOUTH	216
XIV.	MONMOUTH	238
XV.	TO TINTERN	252
XVI.	TO CHEPSTOW AND THE SEVERN	270
	INDEX	291

A BOOK OF THE WYE

A BOOK OF THE WYE

I

INTRODUCTION

IN making a study, however superficial, of any of the various countries which, remote though some of them be from the old capital, form a part of Europe, one finds oneself immediately confronted on the threshold of one's pleasure by many unanswerable questions, chiefly historical; but before all else, I think one is faced by certain questions of political geography that could never occur in America or Africa, and scarcely as living questions in Asia, but that in Europe might seem to be of paramount importance.

Such questions, for instance, are always present with us in Italy, where so long is history and so great the changes to which it bears witness, quite down to our own time, that geography is often the

only thing left to us that, speaking largely, is still the same. The most superficial traveller who visits Florence or Perugia must often have asked himself what Tuscany or Umbria may really have been, how they came to be separated from other parts of Italy, and how those vast districts now so vague ever came to have any reality. No very ready answer would be forthcoming from any book I know to either of these questions, and this I have always thought a pity.

In dealing with Wales no such difficulty will really present itself; but if we are to consider with any degree of satisfaction the part of that country with which this book proposes to deal, it will be well to set out as clearly as possible a few facts concerning what we may call its political geography. Our subject is the Wye, its pleasant valley and riverside towns which make up, I suppose, one among the better known tourist districts of Britain. But the Wye rises in a Welsh mountain, and for a part of its course is a Welsh stream, and may be said through all the rest of its length to be a river of the Border. What, then, do we mean, what did our fathers mean by Wales?

Strictly speaking, the political geography of Wales belongs to the period of the separate existence of that country, which did not terminate

so early as is commonly supposed. It is true that Edward I finally submitted Wales to English power, but it only became part of the English realm in the reign of Henry VIII, when it was annexed by the English Legislature [27 Henry VIII, c. 26] and was politically merged in the United Kingdom of England and Wales. The name of England has been and is frequently used for the whole realm, not only in popular but in official language, yet the name of Wales survives—a perpetual testimony to distinctions of race and language.[1]

The political boundary of Wales originally coincided with its physical boundary, namely, the line of the rivers Severn and Dee. This vast district thus geographically separate from Britain proper was geologically separate also. A glance at a geological map of Britain will at once bring this almost dramatically to light. Moreover, it will be seen that, if that small part of the Severn Valley which lies between the river and the Malvern Hills be excepted, all that part of Britain within those river boundaries—the original political boundaries of Wales—all Devon and Cornwall west of the Exe, and practically all Strathclyde, are formed of pre-carboniferous rocks; and here

[1] See H. S. Milman, "The Political Geography of Wales," in "Archeologia" (1860), vol. xxxviii, p. 19 *et seq.*

the Celt flourishes; while all southern, eastern, and north-eastern England, formed of post-carboniferous rocks, is the English land. This is at least a strange coincidence. And it brings to our minds the fact that these pre-carboniferous parts of England, and especially Wales, are to this day inhabited by a race that has always been alien from us in spirit, in habit of thought and temperament, and to a small extent is so still in language. How are we to explain this?

We hear much of the Celtic temperament and so forth, and it is the sentimental fashion of the day to regard the possession of it as something that lifts one above one's fellows who are in possession of something quite different. Yet history, so far as we may trust her, by no means encourages a man in this belief. Something poetical, a profound and secret spiritual strength seems, in fact, to be claimed for this race, which we recognize in history for its defeats rather than its victories. Something poetical—yet the great poets of the world are Greeks, Italians, and Englishmen. Something profoundly spiritual—yet the great religious leaders in Europe have been Italians, Spaniards, Englishmen, and Germans. What, then, is the great virtue of the Celt, since he is rarely victorious in war, and never pre-eminent in poetry or religion? His great characteristic is

his power of resistance, and it is just that which explains his presence in the pre-carboniferous parts of England, the oldest and the most inaccessible parts of Britain.

He will tell you that he is the oldest claimant now existing to our Island. In that he is almost certainly wrong. The two Celtic invasions of which we are dimly aware came to Britain and conquered and ruled here. That they massacred the inhabitants they found in possession is unthinkable, for had they done so, there would have remained none to serve them as slaves, they would have been masters of a bare land. They came and enslaved who but our fathers of South Britain; for though we have the Celt, the Saxon, and the Norman in us, we were here before them all, and to this day you may see the lines of our towns on the southern hills on a quiet day after rain, and lay bare our fathers' heads in the Long Barrows on many a bare upland of our Island. As for the Celt, he invaded and conquered us, perhaps because he brought with him newer and better weapons than we possessed, but chiefly because, coming from the mainland, he was in possession of a higher civilization than we, and history shows that every Continental people which has landed on these shores has always overcome us, to be—save the Romans—in their

turn overcome by the vast patient persistence—not resistance but meekness, the power to submit and to go on, that is a great part of our character.

The Celt overcame us and established his power, and was already to some extent at the mercy of new and German invaders when on an ever-glorious day we were sighted upon the horizon of Rome, and the greatest soldier of all time found us out, and in little more than a hundred years we were brought into the Empire. Even so the hardest victories of Rome had been those won in that part of Britain of which our book is in some sort to treat—the country of the Silures in the district we now call Hereford and Radnor.

Whether or no the resisting Celt had already begun to separate himself from the older population and take up the ground of his last stand in the western parts of the Island we know not, but undoubtedly with the departure of the Legions, the decline and fall of the Empire, the invasion of the Barbarians, the advent of the Dark Ages, this is what he did. For a hundred years then Christianity had been the official religion of the Empire; for a hundred years longer it had been the religion, probably, of the majority of its citizens. That the Celt would feel the change more than we—was he not the aristocrat, was he not

then in possession of his famous temperament?—was certain. He set himself to resist furiously the newcomers—as we know, in vain; the Dark Ages rolled up, Roman Britain sank into Barbarism and did not begin to emerge from it till S. Augustine, at the head of a new Roman Legion, brought back Europe and our Faith. To the Celt we owe no sort of thanks. He was fast in his mountains; it was we who suffered, submitted, and went on. But his resistance cost him dear. For us the Dark Ages were to pass with the unity of England under Cerdic's house. For him they remained, establishing in his character certain curious provincialisms not yet wholly passed from him.

The Romans, of whose rule here we have never made enough or even understood, drove roads through Wales and held it subject to their government, placing their legions with amazing science. How easily Rome held Wales, and what consummate skill was hers, will become obvious to us when we consider the attempts of the English and Norman kings to do the like. Let us consider this for a moment.

In Roman Britain the main army was ever on the frontiers. There were no troops at all in the south and east after the Ninth Legion was moved forward to York from Lincoln, a sufficient piece

of evidence for the orderliness of the main part of South Britain. In the north the army based on York, where the Sixth Legion, succeeding the Ninth, was stationed, was on the Wall. But the army of the south, consisting almost solely of legionaries, was quartered wholly in the west. On the Welsh Border there were two full Legions always stationed in the cantonments they had occupied since the earliest days of the Conquest; the Second Legion (Augusta) at Caerleon (Isca Silurum), the Twentieth (Valeria Victrix) at Chester (Deva). With these two Legions—so admirably placed—Rome held Wales. There were, of course, forts as in the North within Wales itself, garrisoned by auxiliaries, and held from time to time by detachments from Caerleon and Chester. These forts were set along the roads, which for the far greater part traversed the sea-coast.

There was a road along the south coast from Caerleon to Carmarthen, and along the north coast from Chester to Carnarvon by way of Caerhyn. The nature of these two great military highways, which have so great an influence on the subsequent history of Wales, we shall consider later. They were joined by the famous mountain road, Sarn Helen, which, leaving Caerhyn, climbed a great shoulder of

Moel Siabod, and skirted Cardigan Bay, defended by the forts at Festiniog, Aberystwyth, and Llanio in Cardiganshire. Few roads penetrated the mountainous interior, but the valleys of the South, particularly the Usk Valley, show evidences of their existence.

That Rome kept order in Wales who can doubt? While we know that a good part of her business there was from the third century onward to keep the Irish out; her Legions at Caerleon and Chester being as well placed for this purpose as to hold Wales itself. From Caerleon she held the Severn sea, from Chester the Mersey and the Dee.

But the Legions[1] departed, and with them for very many centuries all peace from Wales and the Welsh Border, which was still defined by the course of the rivers Severn and Dee. The first great fact for Wales of the English conquest was that this ancient border of Severn and Dee was gradually thrust back upon her, and a new and artificial boundary, at first no doubt vague and indeterminate, but at length to be materially defined by what we know as Offa's Dyke, was set up. This stretched, as is supposed, from the mouth of the Wye to mouth of the Dee. It was Offa, King of Mercia, who, whether he built the

[1] Doubtless the Legions were mostly British.

Dyke or no, in 778 and 784 "drove the Welsh beyond Dee and Wye, and filled with Saxons the plain and more level regions lying between these rivers and the Severn." [1] The boundary thus established was vindicated at the battle of Rhyddlan by Cenwulf (796–821), his successor, though not of his line, and adopted by Egbert of Wessex when Mercia came into his power. "By Egbert the king was a law made that it should be present death for the Welch to pass over Offa's Dyke, as John Beire the monk of Westminster, reporteth." [2]

Whether the Dyke was a fortification or a mere boundary remains undecided, but for a good part of its course it accompanies, and sometimes seems to coincide with, the lower course of the Wye. Indeed, Athelstan, in summoning the Welsh princes to Hereford as to a frontier town, and confining their subjects within the Wye, was merely confirming the work of Offa.[3] The passage of the Wye by the Welsh was ever regarded as an invasion. In the eleventh century, "when the Britons had invaded and were devastating England, Duke Harold was sent by Edward the Confessor to expel them. He ordered then that

[1] *Cf.* Langhorne's "Chronicon," p. 292.
[2] Speed's "Theatre of Great Britain : Radnorshire."
[3] *Cf.* W. of Malmesbury, ii, cap. 134, p. 214.

any Briton who was thenceforth found with weapons on this side Offa's Dyke should lose his right hand." [1]

Such was the boundary at the Norman Conquest. Neither then nor ever during the period in which Wales remained separate from England was any other limit recognized, permitted, or laid down.

But with the Conquest we come to that period which is the most interesting in all Welsh history —the period which came to an end with the conquest of Edward I.

We know how William dealt with England; how he established here a peculiar kind of feudalism which made the Crown the strongest power in England, and effectually prevented the great nobles from successfully establishing themselves against it. Feudalism properly understood has never obtained in England. That logical and perfect chain which, link by link, united, always mediately, the king and his subjects, and which is seen in its highest perfection in France, and, if we could but see it, was the very woof of political thought in Italy, never bound us. But on the Welsh borders it found a home; feudalism as Italy knew it there found a congenial soil, and William, so careful to establish no other real

[1] John of Salisbury (1639), vi, 6, 345.

power than his own in England, there established great barons as feudatory lords, holding their lands from the king as far as the king could reach, but free to conquer and to hold as much of Wales as they were able, as absolute lords, from whom there was no appeal. It was these lords who first undertook the conquest of Wales.

Thus we see at the beginning of the Norman domination in England a new system of occupation and government applied to the Welsh Border. The great lords who ruled there came to be known as the Lords Marchers, for that part of Wales which little by little they conquered and held for themselves, not from the king but by conquest, was known as the Marches of Wales.

To illustrate the state of affairs thus established, let us suppose some baron to have obtained a lordship on the Wye, which he held from the king on certain terms. He would build a Norman castle; that would be one of the conditions of his tenure as well as one of the necessities of his existence. At first he probably held nothing beyond Wye, then he would conquer a little, and all he conquered was his own absolutely; then a little more, till he held as far as he could see, and so more and still more, till he was a great and powerful lord by reason of his Welsh, or, as they came then to be called, Marcher lands,

quite apart from any English land he held from the king. There in his conquered lands he was a prince, owning no over-lord. He had his own courts and officials, he coined money, had his own *jura regalia*, and the right as well as the power of waging war with his army of Welsh or Anglo-Welsh, the head and nucleus of which was his Norman or Anglo-Norman soldiery.

Thus was the stronghold of the Celts broken asunder, and in the course of just over a hundred years after the Conquest brought successfully into the power of England.

In this strange conquest two facts stand out very clearly. The one is the fundamental division of North from South Wales which was already hoary when Norman William landed; the other is the vastly easier task the barons had with the South than with the North. Both these facts are due, at least to a very large extent, to geographical causes. North Wales, centring in Snowdonia, is divided from South Wales by range after range of difficult mountains which spring from the Cader Idris group. The mountains raised a physical barrier of vast magnitude against any barbarian or even early mediaeval troops. It is true there were roads—the Romans had built them, as we have seen—but they were no longer in repair, and the Norman mailed horse

were ill adapted for the mountains. It was, nevertheless, the roads, in spite of their ruin, which chiefly assisted the conquest, and by their different character to a large extent determined the different fortune of the Normans in North and South Wales.

If we ask why were the Norman lords so successful in the South, almost wholly unsuccessful in the North, we shall find a good part of our answer in the fact that the Roman coast-road in the North occupied a very narrow strip between the mountains and the sea, while the mountains were themselves covered with dense forest, which gave the Welsh everywhere a perfect cover, and formed, in fact, in itself an infinite natural fortress for them, broken by no valleys save that of the Clwyd. No Norman troops could maintain themselves on a road in such a situation. Moreover, their base, Chester, was an indifferent naval station. But in the South all was different. The Roman coast-road lay on a wide plain, and the mountains were broken by four valleys, those of the Wye, Usk, Taff, and Towy. On these lines the Norman advance was possible. They marched on, grasping this to-day, that to-morrow, held what they grasped, and built those great and solid castles against which the Welsh dashed themselves to pieces, and not the Welsh

alone, for we find the formidable, gigantic work of the little square men in Normandy, Italy, and Sicily, and always with a certain wonder and awe.

And so when Edward I set out finally to assert the supremacy of the Crown of England so long claimed for it, he found South Wales already conquered, and his wars, conducted with a wonderful genius, resolved themselves into an assertion of supremacy over the unruly barons of that region and into a reduction of the untamed North, the which he achieved well and truly, as we see at this day, when for nearly seven hundred years the English Crown has been paramount there, and for nearly four hundred Wales has been incorporated into England.

It is not our business to follow the fortunes of the great Edward in Wales. That has been done once and for all by Mr. J. G. Morris in his excellent book on "The Welsh Wars of Edward I." But since our subject is the Wye, and we may now begin to approach it, we may well inquire what was the state and condition of that valley in the time of the great king.

Topographically the condition of the valley was then much what it is to-day, and it will be part of our plan to explore and to describe it. Its social condition, however, differs to-day, as does every part of Britain, from what it was in

the Middle Ages. For it is not only the unruly barons, the forerunners, after all, of European civilization and stable government and order, which have been superseded and destroyed, but the life of the towns and larger villages, which have lost to a great extent their consciousness and gaiety in the modern centralization.

Moreover, we miss, too, something more than that—something which made that possible, the loss of which, the destruction of which, more than anything else, has changed for us the face of England, and irreparably divides Old England from the England of to-day—I mean the destruction of the religious houses. These were one and all on the lower river, and the first a traveller descending the Wye would have seen were those at Hereford, of which nothing remains but a few stones of the Dominican house, a small and late establishment. Lower down the river, at Flanesford, he would have found a noble Priory. At Monmouth he might have seen something of the Benedictines, but the great spectacle after all would have been the beautiful Cistercian Abbey of Tintern, then perfect with life, now as dead as murdered Glastonbury, while of the Benedictine Abbey at Chepstow, the last glory of his journey, nothing remains for us but a few stones.

Yes, it is true travel for us in England has lost almost all its charm; a great gulf is fixed between us and our fathers. Old England and our England are almost strangers. This, and this alone, is what makes the fundamental difference between travel in Italy and in England to-day. In Italy every day's journey is an unrolling of a great emblazoned page of the history of Europe; in England we have cut out all the blazons, and having smutched the old record till it is illegible, have forged a new one which passes for the truth.

Consider, then, what a few days' journey in any part of England would have shown us in the end of the fifteenth century, what it might have shown us still, visibly confirming our past to us, but which, through the incredible wickedness and folly of fools, it can never show us any more.

Nor can anything we may achieve restore it to us. We have a landscape, always charming, frequently beautiful, but too often without character, too rich for contentment, and for too long without gesture or expression. But a landscape is not enough. We need the work of our fathers, their remembrance and monuments, the love they gave, the thoughts they had about it all. These we have lost for ever. Westminster

Cathedral, howsoever splendid, can never be what the Abbey was, for an Englishman the greatest of all works of art in Europe and the world. Belmont may flourish, but can never mean to us what Tintern meant. Downside may be filled with music, but what is that to us now Glastonbury is dumb?

Who among us all that has walked with enthusiasm and joy the dusty ways of Italy, who that has risen at dawn to win Montone at eve, or striven against heat and weariness to find Todi in the midst of Umbria, can ever be content in England now that the greed of a king, the damnable barbarism of Cromwell have littered it with ruins? Is there any on any English road who has not mourned that he will never see the sapphire altar of Glaston, or kneel before the great Shrine of the Confessor, or meditate a little by Harold's tomb? If there be any such, let him fling away this book and make what he can of his machines, for he and I must part company.

II

TO WELSH WALES

THE traveller who, setting forth from England, wishes to explore the sources of the river Wye, and to discover first of all the wild seclusion of the valley whose name has come to be a synonym for beauty and pleasure, will find that the little town of Llanidloes, in the upper valley of the Severn, is the nearest point of departure at which the railway will deliver him. It is possible to reach Llanidloes from Southern England by the Severn Tunnel, and so proceeding by rail up the Wye Valley from Chepstow through Monmouth, Ross, and Hereford, to come into Wales, into what we now call Wales—though the true boundary, as we have seen, is that of Offa's Dyke and the Wye—at Hay, and so changing trains at Three Cocks Junction, passing Builth and Rhayader, to leave the Wye Valley by which on this route we have entered Wales, not so very

far after all from its wild source; coming to Llanidloes at last at the northern end of the pass that unites the valley of the Wye with that of the Severn.

This, however, is a tedious journey, involving some fatigue and a good deal of travelling in the small carriages and on the slow lines of a mountainous country. Moreover, it involves one in two journeys over precisely the same ground. A far better, easier, and more interesting approach to the sources of the Wye is that which takes one first of all to what seems to be the true English gate of Wales—Shrewsbury. And if one has set out from London and is largely unacquainted with England, as most of us are, that day's journey will not be without its surprises for him—its surprises and its delights—for by this way, even more than another, he may learn the lie of our land and realize what England is.

You leave London at Paddington by what is the most beautiful as it is the richest and the most famous of our valleys—the valley of the Thames: a great highway and the great barrier which divides Southern England from the Midland shires. At Windsor, set practically and of purpose a day's march from the capital, just off the Via Militaria which even in the Dark and

Middle Ages gave as good a road to London as was to be found in our Island, you come upon the great "warden" of London, a first-class fortress possibly established by the Romans and, as we may still see, re-established and used by the Conqueror and his successors. The first great fortress on the Thames was the Tower outside the City of London, the second was Windsor, the third Reading, the fourth Wallingford. We pass them all but the first, on our way to Shrewsbury, before we come to the second great city on the Thames—Oxford.

Reading, as we have clean forgotten, owed a large measure of its importance to its great monastery; but it must have been a considerable fortress long before the monks built their great house there. Even to-day it is an important junction. Here in going west to-day, as in the Middle Age and earlier, one leaves the Thames Valley for the valley of the Kennet.

Just beyond Reading the beautiful valley narrows and we enter the great pass between the chalk of the Chiltern Hills and the chalk of the White Horse Hills, known to us as the Thames Gap. Such natural features, the backbone of our country, pass unseen by the modern traveller, for they do not impress themselves upon us since our hills are low.

As for Wallingford, that there was a fortress —even a Roman fortress—there is certain. It is difficult, however, to determine the exact reason of its importance. Like Reading, it had its Abbey, but perhaps its fame owed its origin rather to the fact that it was the last and lowest ford of the Thames always fordable, and the road thence, through the Vale of White Horse or along the Marlborough Downs to Bath, Bristol, and the Mendips, would thus always be open to the traveller from the wilder and more barbarous North or along the Chiltern Hills from the still Danish East.

Long e'er we have decided such a point as this, however, one of the secrets of England, we are in Oxford, the most beautiful and the noblest city that is left to us. All the romance of England seems to find its home in Oxford, the western gate of the Empire; all that is best and noblest, too, in our history—the coming and the glory of the Friars, the Renaissance of Learning, the Defence of the Church, the Fight for the Throne, the true superiority of our civilization.

But for us to-day Oxford has this importance also: for it is there under her spires that we leave the Thames Valley and make our way into the Midlands of England, that vast plain which

stretches from the Cotteswolds to the great Fens of East Anglia.

That vast plain is islanded with a few hills—Edgehill and the Northampton uplands running north-east and north-west, for instance—and as we leave Oxford by the valley of the Cherwell we pass under Edgehill by Banbury and enter the rich Vale of Evesham; at Leamington reaching the centre of England, and at Warwick getting a view of the castle with its many memories, crossing the Avon there, some eight miles above Stratford, and by the gate of Warwick entering the Forest of Arden.

If this be not England, where shall we find it? Alas, we are on the very borders here and must pass into that black and mournful country of which Birmingham, within sight of the Clent Hills, is the centre. Of Birmingham there is nothing to say. It is part of that Industrial England which is still in transition, which is not rightly anything at all, but, without form and void of beauty as yet, is so busy becoming something, let us hope and believe. From Birmingham to Wolverhampton it is city and factory and burnt waste all the way, out of which dingy *campanili* rise more terrible than any of those which affrighted us in the Middle Age in San Gimignano and elsewhere. But after leaving

Wolverhampton you may view from afar off the very hills as of old, first the Wrekin in the west and the last low foothills of the Pennine Chain in the north, if you be lucky, and all the pass between them we call the Midland Gap, for by it all the energy of this industrial country runs like a millrace to the great new ports on the Irish Sea.

Let us be thankful that some friendly eddy here casts us out of the stream at the great and beautiful town of Shrewsbury on Severn, the English gate of Wales.

> "High the vanes of Shrewsbury gleam
> Islanded in Severn stream;
> The bridges from the steepled crest
> Cross the waters east and west.
>
> The flag of morn in conqueror's state
> Enters at the English gate,
> The vanquished eve, as night prevails,
> Bleeds upon the road to Wales."

I suppose no one can enter Shrewsbury to-day, even in a third-class carriage of a railway train, without whispering those words in his heart, from the one work of our time that seems to bear upon it already the impress of immortality. If anyone can, he is not I. This is the gate of Wales, and though there be others it is in

truth the oldest and the noblest of all, nobler than Chester, older and nobler than Hereford.

"The sound of fight is silent long," yet there at least, looking from that tremendous castle far and far away to the mountains up Severn Valley, it seems to be but yesterday that we made ready to set out—

> "When Severn down to Buildwas ran
> Coloured with the death of man."

And if Shrewsbury be our gate, the valley of Severn is our road, a beautiful and a glorious road, to Welshpool, to Montgomery, to Llanidloes into Wales.

From Welshpool you enter the old Vale of Powis under the Long Mountain bearing Offa's Dyke; indubitably here you are in Wales beyond our earthworks, in a strange country of great and difficult hills that have not the gesture or shape of mountains, but that are nevertheless of a considerable and even a great height. At Moat Lane you are as near a Roman road as you are likely to be in Wales in all your journey: it is the last vestige of Rome you will see till you return into England. Yes, deny it how you will, comfort yourself how you may, west of Offa's Dyke an Englishman is in a country as strange to him as though he had crossed the

Alps; nay, stranger, for Italy is our home. Europe is Europe all over, but Europe seems to end at Offa's Dyke.

This is confirmed for you at Llanidloes, where, however, you still have the river to comfort you—an English river if ever there was one, that I have known and used ever since I could see or walk and my forbears before me. It washes the Mendips, Brean Down, and the Quantocks, and is lost in the sea beyond Lundy, and from it we have been used to set out on our best adventures for ages. Yet for all that it rises in this wild, strange country and bears even at its mouth many of the characteristics that Giraldus Cambrensis, whom some madmen desire to call Gerald the Welshman, assures us are most characteristic of his countrymen—treachery for one, "acts of plunder, theft, robbery, not only against foreigners and hostile nations, but even against their own countrymen." However that may be of the Welshman to-day—and I for one, in spite of his strange collection of religions, refuse to believe it a true portrait, having in my heart a far different—it is true of the river, which is so far Welsh that it has conserved even to its mouth the characteristics Gildas also gives his people, namely, that they are not to be trusted. As to that I do not believe it neither

of the Welsh; the true nature of the Welsh being different from our own, namely, a fanatical, so that he will always resist what he thinks evil, having little true judgment of what is really evil or good, and no aptitude at all, as the English have, for overcoming evil with good. Just there is the whole history of the two nationalities hid, and Gildas and Giraldus, both in their own ways, not only failed to understand it, but are themselves examples of this limitation.

But Llanidloes is an English-speaking town, and so far as the traveller is concerned he might be in Hereford, for all he will note the difference in speech between the townsmen. The inn is a fairly good one, the landlord civil, the beds clean and soft, and the walks to be had about the place, as that especially toward Stay-a-Little, altogether charming and delightful. The scenery is sylvan and gentle, it is never grand or big, only on the way I have named it presently opens out on a wild moorland with far away great hills that separate the valleys of Clywedog and Taranon.

The most delightful scene about Llanidloes, however, is the valley of the Severn itself, and that view is not the least which may be had from the fine bridge over the river, where all day long you may watch the children fishing and

the women, as in an Italian village, washing on the big stones beside the stream. Nor should the church by any means be missed, for though from without it seems of little account, it is covered by a roof brought from the Abbey of Cwm Hir, and dates apparently from the thirteenth century. From the churchyard you may see the Clywedog join the Severn just above the bridge. As for me, having that day come all the way from London, when I had seen what I have written down I returned to the inn, which was the *Trewythen*, and after making arrangements with the landlord to drive me next day to Wye head, as we should say in the West Country, I went to bed.

III

TO LLANGURIG

IT was about eight o'clock on a fine June morning when I set out from Llanidloes to possess myself of the sources of the Wye. The road which leads one out of the valley of the Severn over the low pass into the valley of the Wye shows little wildness or grandeur, for it runs through a pretty wooded country, and is only bare at the summit, 960 feet above the sea. Before it reaches Llangurig nothing of much interest is to be seen unless it be a discarded railroad, or a sudden glimpse of Plynlimon just before one crosses the bridge over the stream, that on the left loses itself in a small lake densely surrounded by half-grown shrubs and trees.

At Llangurig one comes into the Wye Valley, and it was there I purposed sleeping that night. But with the whole long day before me I did not stop now, save to leave my bag, but proceeded up the wild and lonely valley, very different in

every way from that of the Severn as seen from Llanidloes.

It was after some ten miles of lonely road that grows continually wilder and lonelier that I came at last to Eisteddfa-Curig—the resting-place of Curig—now a lonely farmhouse under the greater height of Plynlimon, Pen Plynlimon-fawr. There I left the road which is the old highway to Aberystwyth, and after a somewhat tedious climb, the road being staked out the whole way so that there is now no danger of drowning oneself in a bog, I found myself at the famous and beautiful spot where the Wye springs from the hoar mountain-side, and takes its first childish leap towards the sea. No one, I suppose, who visits this desolate solitude is likely to forget that Borrow has been there before him. He approached the mountain from the other side, his head full of Ab Gwilym, but he perfectly describes the scene where the three rivers rise, the Severn, the Rheidol, and the Wye—scarcely three miles one from another, and, as will be remembered, after "drinking copiously of the fountain of the Wye . . . taking off his hat," he lifted up his voice and sang :—

> "From high Plynlimon's shaggy side
> Three streams in three directions glide;
> To thousands at their mouths who tarry
> Honey, gold, and mead they carry.

Flow also from Plynlimon high
Three streams of generosity:
The first, a noble stream indeed,
Like rills of Mona runs with mead;
The second bears from vineyards thick
Wine to the feeble and the sick;
The third, till time shall be no more,
Mingled with gold shall silver pour."

When Borrow had ceased singing, his guide desired an explanation of the song; and as it seems to me, it is the one unsatisfactory thing in that chapter that Borrow only gives him a very general and lame one.

The source of the Wye is charming enough even for so beloved a river. Plynlimon has five, or, as Borrow's guide would have it, six summits. The two greater are Pen Plynlimon-fawr in Cardigan, which is 2,468 feet high, and Pen Plynlimon-wstle in Montgomery, which is 2,427. Between these two heights is a lesser, and it is here the Wye rises in Montgomery, though, in fact, actually on its border. Beyond Pen Plynlimon-wstle rises Bryn Cras, 2,083 feet high, and it is under the north shoulder of this that the greatest river in Britain is born, for there is the source of the Severn.

Plynlimon, though by no means among the loftiest of Welsh mountains, or even among the most picturesque, is a really tremendous affair,

and I suppose one of the oldest rocks in Britain, or in the world. In spite of its comparatively low altitude—low in comparison with Snowdon or Cader Idris—it is very well worth any traveller's while to climb to one of its summits. I chose the lower and eastern peak, and the view I thus won on that rare June morning was worth all my trouble. Half Wales and more seemed to lie before me. I saw the mountains of the Cader range, and thought Snowdon beckoned far away. The long headland of Carnarvon seemed to hold half the sea in its crook, and the ragged capes of Pembroke gleamed in the far south beyond a lovely mountainous land which was altogether a stranger to me. Scarce a sound broke the vast silence which shut me off from the world; now and then a hawk circled in the sun seeking some prey, sometimes a wheatear sang its few feeble notes or a lark somewhere in heaven praised God in His holiness. There was no other sound. Then, after an hour there alone, I descended, to find the lower slopes white with sheep, and my luncheon basket awaiting me at Eisteddfa-Curig.

Eisteddfa-Curig means, if it mean anything, "the resting-place of Curig," just as Llan-Curig means the enclosure or Church of Curig, and I very much wanted to know who this Curig might

be. The poor guide-book I had brought along with me was silent, and Borrow had little or nothing to say in the matter, being occupied at the moment with fairies and corpse-candles, and as for my landlord, in these matters he was as indifferent as he was ignorant. I reckon him a sort of Ana-baptist. Curig, however, as I learned later, was one of those innumerable and obscure British Saints with whom S. Augustine and his followers had so much trouble later, till they were disposed of with that bludgeon their friends have so often found useful: "Tu es Petrus et super hanc Petram aedificabo Ecclesiam Meam." Of S. Curig it seems, like many of his brethren, very little, indeed almost nothing, is known. He seems to have landed somewhere in the region of Aberystwyth from Ireland nearly a hundred years after S. Augustine came to Kent. It is probable that he did not come as an Evangelist, but rather as a solitary, seeking to be alone. If so he must certainly have been pleased with the prospect before him as he camped or rested at this spot, which, I suppose, will for ever bear the name—I cannot say the remembrance—of his visit. That he found it too exposed, too windy, and too cold and too barren even for his asceticism is likely, for, as we shall see, he established himself lower

down the valley at Llanguric, where he built his little church of wattle. There he seems in some sort to have become a missionary, though, if we may believe the Welsh historians, they could have needed no such person nearly a hundred years after the landing of S. Augustine. At any rate, he was given a Bishopric, probably that of Llanbadarn, founded by S. Padarn in the previous century, which included within its jurisdiction much of what we call Montgomeryshire. He is not, however, to be confused with S. Cyrigue, the patron of Capel Curig and other places, and he can indeed claim as his own only the solitary church of Llanguric, which we shall visit on our way down stream.

It was late afternoon when I set out on the ten-mile drive by Wye side to Llanguric. The valley, cold, barren, and desolate, has the character of all mountain valleys I know, and one might imagine oneself in some obscure and lesser corner of the Alps or the Pyrenees as easily as in Wales. There is, in fact, nothing whatever to attract one between Eisteddfa-Curig and Llangurig save the river itself, which rushes between the stones and boulders of its infant course with all the haste and enthusiasm of youth. The first two and a half miles, however, below Eisteddfa-Curig are

not in the Wye Valley at all, but in that of the Afon Tarenig, which joins the Wye about half a mile above Pantmawr, at a height of 1,058 feet. Thence you climb a little in the ever-widening valley, and then descend all the way, the Wye gathering to itself many a tributary from the southern hills, the only one coming into it from the north being the Bidno, which is, however, by far the most considerable above Llangurig. A quarter of a mile below the junction of the Bidno with the Wye there is the ford by which the men of the Ystwyth Valley and their beast gain the great road southward and east into Hereford and England. Some of them seemed to be attempting it as I passed.

Llangurig, which so frightened our fathers as a place to pass the night in, is now as comfortable and delightful a spot for such as like solitude as is to be found, I suppose, anywhere in Wales. The inn—the "Black Lion," in the shade of a magnificent ash—is excellent, and has now a reputation to lose, and the traveller may be sure of as good a welcome there as he is likely to find in all this valley. It is a place to linger in.

The church, S. Curig's own, as we have seen, retains, of course, nothing but its name to remind us of him, nor are we told that it ever did. The

traveller, however, from Llanidloes to Rhayader by rail will pass through the station of S. Harmon [S. Germanus] in the valley of the Marteg, where, according to that best of Welsh chroniclers, Giraldus Cambrensis, his staff was preserved in the twelfth century.

"In this same province of Warthrenion,[1] and in the Church of S. Germanus (S. Harmon), there is a staff of Saint Curig covered on all sides with gold and silver, and resembling in its upper part the form of a cross. Its efficacy has been proved in many cases, but particularly in the removal of glandular and strumous swellings, insomuch that all persons afflicted with these complaints on a devout application to the staff with the oblation of one penny are restored to health. But it happened in these our days that a strumous patient on presenting one halfpenny, the humour subsided only in the middle; but when the oblation was completed by the other halfpenny, an entire cure was accomplished. Another person, also coming to the staff with the promise of a penny, was cured; but not fulfilling his engagement on the day appointed, he relapsed into his former disorder. In order, however, to obtain pardon for his offence, he tripled the offering by presenting threepence, and thus obtained a com-

[1] Rhayader was the centre of this province it seems.

plete cure." This staff seems to have been burnt at the time of the Reformation.[1]

That S. Curig two centuries after the time of Giraldus was a popular Saint we learn from the works of Borrow's Lewis Glyn Cothi. For that poet in making fun of the mendicant friars who were always selling charms and such for bacon or cheese, or wool, or what they could get, says: "One of them would bear by turns the blessed Curig under his cloak, while another carried Seirol and nine cheeses in his bosom."

Mr. Hamer tells us that traditions respecting S. Curig's miraculous powers of healing are still to be heard of in the parish. His festa is 17 June. Thus are the "Free Churches" brought to nought in their own land. But, for all that, it is not so long since the Vicar of the Church of Llangurig was ignorant of the very name of the patron of his church. According to Mr. Lewis Morris, writing more than a century ago, the vicar of the parish, whom he met in the ale-house, "a tolerably ingenious man (as he excels most mountain clergymen), could not inform me what the word Curig meant; he said some derived it from the Scotch kirk. . . . But I told

[1] Hamer, "A Parochial Account of Llangurig" in "Coll. Hist. and Arch. relating to Montgomeryshire," vol. ii (1869), p. 249, and "Arch. Camb." (1858), p. 548.

him there was a Welsh poem by Lewis Glyn Cothi. The vicar was extremely pleased to find that he had a saint to his church as well as his neighbours. . . . He therefore spent his threepence for ale, and after some discourse about tithes we went to rest."

The church consists of a nave, chancel, and small north aisle. Before 1836 the chancel was separated from the nave by an elaborately carved screen and rood loft. But in that year the church was repaired and the screen was taken down, and the churchwardens, in ignorance of its value, allowed anyone to carry away the pieces. It was, of course, the principal object of interest in the church. Mr. Hamer [1] publishes drawings made of it in 1828 by the Rev. John Parker.

Little now remains of interest in the church, though the font is old, but the most ancient part of the building seems to be the tower at the west end, whose vane and spire shine so in the sun from the surrounding dark hills. As Lewis Glyn Cothi says—

"Bright and square as the church of Curig."

In the old days Llangurig was served from the Abbey of Strata Florida, a Cistercian house.

[1] *Op. cit., supra*, p. 252.

After the Dissolution the tithes came into the possession of Lady Dorothy Devereux, daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon.

Llangurig has ever been in Wales; it never made a part of the March, which at its greatest reached only to Rhayader, and that only for a short time. Here we are in true Wales, and many of the old customs, superstitious beliefs, legends, and so forth, linger yet, though the School Board and the spread of English as the sole tongue of this conservative country are gradually killing them.

According to Mr. Hamer, Llangurig has from immemorial time been famous for its conjurers, its manner of keeping wakes, and for the old custom of Arian-y-rhaw. From its far and lonely situation on the skirts of Plynlimon it was doubtless the scene of many Pagan rites before the Romans brought Christianity so far as this. Most of these gods are dead past all resurrection, but in Llangurig the fairies (they say) linger yet, in spite of the Reformation and the all uncharitableness into which it has led us. Let him believe it who can. Yet Dissent and the fairies, or, as the Welsh call them, the Tylwydd Teg, the fair family, have ever been most antipathetic. The fairies seem to have had—how shall I say?—priests, bridge builders between them and human

kind, and these in Wales were known as conjurers, men who could summon fairies and spirits. A belief in witchcraft even yet is by no means dead; of old it was as firmly established as a belief in the inspiration of Holy Writ is now. Even the Puritans—a hard-headed generation as a rule—seem to have believed in witchcraft, though the miracles of the Saints they boggled at. Thus in the eighteenth century we find a "Nonconformist Divine," the Rev. Edmund Jones, writing—I quote from Mr. Hamer—"Had his Majesty King George II read the 'History of Witchcraft,' and known as much as we do in some parts of Wales, he would not have called upon his Parliament to determine that there are no such things as witches, and his Parliament would hardly have complimented him therein. If they say there never was such things as witches in the world, the Scripture is against them, both the Old and the New Testament, for there were witches in the days of Saul and in the days of Paul." If the "Divines" believed thus, we ought not to be astonished that their flocks were led astray.

"Edward Lloydd in the parish of Llangurig, being very ill, those that were with him heard the voice of some person very near them; they looked about the house but could see no person;

the voice seemed to be in the room where they were. Soon after they heard these words by some thing unseen, 'The uppermost beam of the house cracketh'; soon after, 'There it breaks.' He died that moment, which affected much the company."

Llangurig was famous for its wakes, feasts which no doubt degenerated into mere drunken revels with the decline of religion, but which originated in the religious ceremonies of S. Curig's day. It was, and for all I know still is, the custom at all funerals at Llangurig, when the coffin is lowered into the grave, for the clerk to hold out his shovel over the open grave for contributions from the relations and friends of the dead. Possibly this originated in Catholic times, when it was customary to pay a priest to say Masses for the departed. The money collected on the shovel was called Arian-y-rhaw, and was the clerk's perquisite. No copper was accepted, and Mr. Hamer tells a characteristic story of a certain Richard James, glazier, of Llanidloes, who on one occasion walked over from that town to Llangurig to attend a funeral.

"Arrived at the village and examining his pockets, he found himself the possessor of a solitary silver sixpence, his mite for Arian-y-rhaw. His five-miles walk had not tended to

allay his customary thirst, and the state of his funds provoked a mental debate. Should he have his beer, or should he practise self-denial? It was very difficult to carry out the latter suggestion; his mouth watered at the very thought of his favourite beverage; yet he was too proud to leave the churchyard without contributing, and too dignified to enter the inn moneyless. A happy thought occurred to him, which he at once carried out. He entered the church in the funeral procession, and when it came to his turn to place some piece of money upon the extended shovel, he gravely deposited six copper pennies upon it, for which he had exchanged his sixpenny piece. Observing this act, old George Bennet, who then officiated as clerk, and was landlord of the Upper Inn, quietly addressed him in Welsh.

"'I am greatly obliged to you, Richard James, but no copper coins are received at this offering.'

"'I am very much obliged to you, my dear George,' was the ready response, 'our good friend, Evan Davies' (landlord of the Lower Inn) 'will gladly receive them.'"

IV

TO RHAYADER

ON leaving Llangurig and taking the road by Wye-side for Rhayader the character of the valley is seen to have changed. Instead of the great open moorland, the desolate glen I had traversed till now, I saw before me a deep, winding valley, enclosed by the green precipitous sides of great hills that continually approach one another on either side the stream and obscure any long view of what is before by their smooth, green shoulders. This change in character is only the first of a long series that await us at the beginning of almost every day's journey in this valley.

About a quarter of a mile beyond Llangurig I lost sight of the lesser peak of Plynlimon, and in another mile the greater peak also disappeared. Then, just as I came in sight of Llaniwared, a great and finely shaped green hill that blots out the valley from the west, I lost sight of Llangurig

and was once more alone in the loneliness of the great hills.

It was just as I had come to realize how lonely this great upland country could be, and perhaps to wonder at the goodness of the narrow and ancient road that clings at so uniform a height to the sides of the hills on the east of the river, that opposite a farm called Pant-y-drain, on the right bank of Wye, I passed out of Montgomery into Radnor and came at a step into the old country of Siluria—certainly not the least venerable in Britain.

> "Blessed is the Eye
> Betwixt the Severn and the Wye."

And indeed it is into the pleasantness of this island formed by the two rivers that we enter just here, I think, at a sudden turn of the way.

Radnorshire, according to the Rev. Jonathan Williams, whose History of the County, first published in "Archæologia Cambrensis" and then in book form at Tenby, of all places, in 1859, is said to derive its name from the Saxon words Rade, meaning road, and Nore, meaning narrow. He considers the town of Radnor as the town on the narrow road, and the county as one conspicuous for its passes and defiles, which is true of it especially on the English frontier, where it abounds in

difficult ways beyond any other in Wales. The Celtic name Maesyfed he considers finally to signify a field of birch, a tree which seems to flourish exceedingly in many districts of this county, through which we shall make our way for so many days in traversing this valley. The birch, according to Mr. Williams, "was held in great estimation by three most respectable parties, viz., the British Druids, the Bards, and the Ladies." And what, we may well ask, was the British schoolmaster doing? Surely these were not the days of Radical Socialism, an era of Lloyd George and gentle shepherds, when it would have been considered a crime against a universal sentimentalism to lift a hand in wrath against the British boy! However that may be, the Welsh ladies, according to Mr. Williams, used to "express their acceptance of a lover's addresses and vows by presenting him with a garland composed of the twigs and leaves of this delicate tree. It seems that the Welsh were then acquainted with the ancient British pastime of wife-beating.

More interesting, perhaps, than either of these names, Saxon and Celtic, is that which the Romans bestowed upon all this district of Radnor, as well as upon that comprised in the modern counties of Hereford, Monmouth, Glamorgan,

and Brecknock, namely, Siluria—if indeed this be that region, or we may name it at all exactly.

We know from Tacitus that it was the people of this very considerable district who gave most trouble to the Romans, for they would not be at peace. They were very eager in the defence of their independence, and they won at least this commendation from Tacitus, that he calls them *validissimae gentes*, and tells us that they were inured to every hardship of war, and were so implacably impatient of a foreign yoke that neither courtesy nor force would win them to it.

We know little of their form of government or of their religion, but enough, I suppose, to assure us that they were by no means mere barbarians. Mr. Williams, who is very definite in some of his statements, assures us that their government, which resembled that which prevailed among all the tribes established in Britain, was at first hierarchical, and "prevented aggression and outrage, not by the dread of punishment, but by the influence of opinion." This seems so closely to resemble the moving dreams of some of our great men of to-day that we may at once put it down as having nothing to do with reality. And indeed we soon find that "at a

subsequent period the government of the Silures assumed a monarchical form." Public opinion which demanded that seems always to have been much the same in our island.

"To the Druids were committed the superintendence of religious ceremonies, the decision of controversies, and the education of youth. . . . The courts of justice were holden by the Druids, and by the princes or *reguli* in the open air and on an eminence crowned with a cairn, that all might see and hear their judges and their decisions. . . . No laws could be either enacted or repealed without the consent of King, Nobles, and Druids expressed in a general convention." Truly a very blessed state of affairs! And one can well imagine the disgust such a well-conducted folk would have for the rude and brutal soldiery of Rome, or, as Mr. Williams calls them, "their proud and intolerant conquerors." It seems that Mr. Kipling is right :—

> "Rome never looks where she treads—
> Always her heavy hooves fall
> On our stomachs, our hearts or our heads;
> And Rome never heeds when we bawl.
> Her sentries pass on—that is all,
> And we gather behind them in hordes,
> . . . . .
> With only our tongues for our swords."

But we may, I think, take leave to doubt that

Siluria—even though, as presently seems unlikely, it reached this placid valley—was ever so peaceful and blessed a land of liberty, toleration, and all the modern virtues as Mr. Williams has supposed. At least nothing in the subsequent history of the Welsh people would lead us to accept any such assertion without very definite proof. It is not merely that the Welsh hated the intruder, the conqueror; they always hated one another, and when there was no invader to fight they fought their brethren. "It is also remarkable," says Giraldus, "that brothers show more affection to one another when dead than when living; for they persecute the living even unto death, but avenge the deceased with all their power."

Of what the Romans achieved in Siluria and in Wales, beyond an often-precarious peace, we are for the most part ignorant. We know that the inhabitants opposed them with all their might under Caradoc, or Caractacus, who was carried to Rome in A.D. 51, and whom the Emperor, generously impressed by his noble bearing, pardoned with his friends. When the legions were withdrawn, doubtless this part of Wales, like the rest of Britain, fell into great disorder. What the Saxons achieved in England is still to a large extent hidden from us, but they certainly

made little or no headway in this part of Wales, and when Offa's Dyke was established as the boundary between the two countries, they seem definitely to have given up all idea of conquering it. Indeed, it was not till the time of the last of the Saxon kings, Edward the Confessor—if, in fact, it was so early—that this part of Wales was given the name of Radnor. The final conquest by England began with the advent of the Normans, and in about a hundred years practically all of what Mr. Williams calls Siluria was no longer Wales, but included in the Marches. This indefinite and changing district was, like the rest of Wales, finally absorbed by the English Crown in the time of Edward I.

It is with some such general and vague thoughts as these that we shall perhaps make short the long way to Rhayader, that ten miles of valley, 'twixt highland and lowland, which knows no town, scarcely indeed a village, but which is assuredly not least for beauty among the many reaches of the Wye.

For though the valley retains its wild upland character as far as Rhayader where the woods begin, it has many picturesque passages, the finest perhaps being that where the Marteg joins the nobler stream, and almost unobserved, the railway from Llanidloes enters the valley.

Just there by a lofty and rustic wooden bridge, a favourite spot, as I was to learn, I came upon a sheep-washing, that among these mountain folk, unspoiled by any modern city, is as picturesque and delightful a scene as can be. The farmer with his men and his womenfolk was camped out beside the stream, and the sheep were being forced to swim the river, here deeper than one might think, while a host of helpers for the most part looked on at the business. Some of these farmers have as many as two thousand sheep, and, as it happened, it was in the company of one such that I came about midday into the town of Rhayader.

Rhayader Gwy is a busy little place with a fine inn (the "Royal Lion"), a modern church, the foundations of an old castle, the first on the Wye, and a pleasanter aspect of old-world peace, I think, than any other town in this upper valley between Plynlimon and the Hay.

Rhayader Gwy—the falls or perhaps the ford of Wye—must always have been an important place geographically, and the very ancient remains of civilization which have been found in the neighbourhood point to the great antiquity of the town. Its geographical importance arises from the fact that it was the meeting-place of the roads through the passes from Llanidloes and Central

Wales, the gate to the south and east on the way to England. Standing on the old and picturesque bridge, built in 1780, I began to realize some of these things. Just above Rhayader was an important ford, and this the old castle, situated on the left bank of the stream immediately above the bridge, commanded. Just below the bridge the river falls over a weir; here there is an ancient mill belonging to the Crown, for the King is lord of the manor of Rhayader; while, a mile below, Wye is increased by an important tributary from the west, the Elan.

Rhayader was, so far as we may yet know, never occupied by the Romans, who penetrated no farther in this valley than Builth and the river Ython. But Rhayader probably existed long before the Romans came, and there is a rumour that it was then a more important and much larger place than it has been since the Conquest. Indeed, tradition has it that in those days Rhayader stretched as far as Cefn-ceidio on the east, and to Felin-drê on the south, and equally far west and north, and that the avenues we call lanes were once inhabited streets.

However this may be, it is certain that the Princes of Wales considered Rhayader of great importance, and when they did not possess it set about to obtain it. It became a bone of conten-

tion among them as well as, later, a prize of the English.

We are told that Rhys ap Gruffyd (1132–1197), Prince of South Wales, encamped here for several days with an army of five or six thousand men, and "in the most solemn manner in the church of Rhayader, in the presence of a numerous assemblage of spectators, among whom were the chieftains of the district, confirmed the several grants with which he had endowed his newly-founded abbey [1] of Strata Florida in Cardiganshire."

It seems to have been the same Rhys who built the castle, scarcely a stone of which is left on the precipitous low height on the left bank of Wye just above the bridge. According to Mr. Williams, Rhys built this castle on account of the "depredations and cruelties committed by the Normans and Flemings who had settled themselves on the sea coasts of the counties of Pembroke and Cardigan." It is true that a series of passes lead hence to these coasts, but it might seem impossible that any Norman mailed horse could have maintained themselves in the heart of South Wales, and even less likely that they would have attempted to do so for the sake of

[1] According to Giraldus it was not Rhys, but Robert Fitzstephen, who founded the abbey of Strata Florida.

this far place. It seems more likely that Rhys built the Castle of Rhayader in imitation of Norman practice to maintain himself against his Welsh rivals. At any rate, when the Normans at length seized Rhayader, they came not by the hard passes of Moruge, but, in the person of a Mortimer, from Wigmore and England. And in fact, as though to confirm us in our belief, what do we find? Why this: that no sooner had Rhys completed his castle than the sons of Conan, who was himself the illegitimate son of Owen Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, "envying the glory and prosperity of Rhys, marched with united forces and attacked his favourite castle; but having lain before it a considerable time, they raised the siege in 1178 and returned into their own country disappointed."

Just ten years later, in 1188, Giraldus accompanied Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury in his progress through Wales to preach the Third Crusade. He relates several things of Rhayader. "At Elevein in the Church of Glascum [near Builth] is a portable bell endowed with great virtues called Bangu, and said to have belonged to Saint David. A certain woman secretly conveyed this bell to her husband, who was confined in the castle of Raidergwy (which Rhys, son of Gruffydd, had lately built), for the purpose of

his deliverance. The keepers of the castle not only refused to liberate him for this consideration, but seized and detained the bell; and in the same night, by Divine vengeance, the whole town, except the wall on which the bell hung, was consumed by fire."

It is in 1194 that we hear again of the Castle of Rhayader, when it is again of civil war we are told, a conspiracy breaking out among the sons of Rhys. They imprisoned their aged father and burned the Castle of Rhayader to the ground. Rhys recovered his liberty, however, and "knowing the importance of having a fortified station in this place, which in a manner commanded the communications between North and South Wales, the prince ordered it to be reconstructed and regarrisoned. It was afterwards consigned to the care of Cadwallan ab Madoc, *regulus* of Moelynaidd and Cerri, who zealously supported his country's cause and manfully opposed the encroachments of the ambitious house of Mortimer. He fought several severe battles, and was at length defeated and imprisoned through the treachery of his brothers, whom the English had seduced to favour their interests. Having recovered his liberty and his property he soon died (1230), and his possessions in Moelynaidd and Cerri were distributed . . . among his children, whom Roger

Mortimer, Earl of Wigmore, dispossessed of all their estates in this country. From this period the castle and town of Rhayader Gwy became the property of the family of Mortimer." Thus Rhayader became a part of the Marches, the westernmost point in the Wye Valley that ever made part of that variable dominion. It did not long so remain, for Llewelyn ab Iorwerth, Prince of North Wales, having defeated Hubert de Burgh, the general of Henry III, and compelled him to retire from Wales, destroyed all he could, and laid siege to the Castle of Rhayader, which he took by assault and burnt to the ground, putting the whole garrison of Mortimer to the sword. I imagine that deed to have been one of considerable ferocity, judged by the general manner of war at that time, and in fact to have amounted to "savage" warfare. However that may be, Edward I was at hand, and, so far as I can learn, the Castle of Rhayader never was rebuilt.

The Church of Rhayader, dedicated to S. Clement, stands not far from the castle. It contains very little of interest, but has a long story. Among other things we learn that "on digging the foundations of the present tower in 1783 a great number of skeletons were discovered about a foot below the surface of the ground, arranged side by side in a most regular and

orderly manner with their respective heads placed in the same direction ; one skeleton only excepted, which was of immense size, the thigh bone measuring more than a yard in length. This skeleton was placed in a direction contrary to all the rest. All the teeth in the skulls were sound and whole, and rivalling ivory in whiteness. This discovery gave rise to much discussion. After many conjectures as to the time and occasion of this interment, it was at last unanimously agreed upon that these skeletons were the remains of the garrison soldiers of the castle, whom Llewelyn ab Iorwerth, Prince of North Wales, had put to the sword, and whom the inhabitants of the town buried in this methodical manner under the old belfry of the ancient church. That individual skeleton, which was of gigantic magnitude, and placed in a direction contrary to all the others, was supposed to have been that of the commander of the castle." All these bones were carefully collected and deposited in one large grave opened in the churchyard by order of the father of the Rev. Jonathan Williams, the delightful historian of Radnorshire, whose tales I have quoted so largely.

Probably older than the foundation of Rhayader Church is that of Cwmdeuddwr, on the right bank of the Wye below the bridge.

This, with the Grange, a large territory, was given by Rhys ap Gruffyd to the monks of Strata Florida, who served it.

But it is the Church of Rhayader that continued till recent times its ancient customs. There it was the custom for Divine Service to be said on Christmas Day at six in the morning, on which occasion the church was "completely illuminated." "The abuse of this pious custom," Mr. Williams tells us—a custom called in the Welsh "Plygain"—"caused its abolition." We may possibly see there the last remnant of a memory for the Mass of the Aurora. It would be interesting to know what abuses could possibly have spoiled that service.

Another ancient practice, the same authority tells us, "derived probably from Druidical institution, was observed in Rhayader till of late years with rigid tenacity. The attendants in every funeral procession were wont to carry a small stone or pebble in their hand, which on the arrival of the bier at the turn of the road leading to the church, they threw to a large heap of stones that had accumulated there by similar means, saying, 'Carn ar dy ben,' that is 'A stone on thy head.' This relic, savouring of superstition, though harmless in itself, was deemed unfit to be continued under the light of Christianity."

We might remark that since for at least a thousand years it had obtained "under the light of Christianity," without in any way obscuring it, there seemed no need of suppressing it in the nineteenth century.

But to return to the history of Rhayader. In 1340 the town was the property of Roger Mortimer, Earl of Wigmore and of March, and remained with little interruption in the possession of that family till Edward IV brought it to the Crown of England. The place suffered from Owen Glendower, and Henry IV was compelled to deal with it. It did not regain its prosperity till Henry VII of the house of Tudor reigned in England and his son Henry VIII made England and Wales one. In those days Rhayader possessed the county court, and the court of great sessions was held there. The hall or court was situated at Pen-y-porth, opposite the Presbyterian Chapel, which was itself the prison.

But Rhayader fell from its high estate in very curious fashion. It seems that in Queen Elizabeth's time a number of bandits—disbanded soldiers for the most part—had for long found a refuge and a home in a great cavern near the Devil's Bridge in Cardigan. They were called Plant Mat—the children of the Mat—and

were wont to sally forth to rob and gather tribute from the surrounding country, and even if refused to slay. One night they came to Rhayader, hiding in the Cwmdeuddwr parish, where they learned that the judge would go to church on the following morning at such an hour before opening sessions. So they made ready, crossed the river, met their man on his way to church, and shot him through the heart; then they made good their escape in the confusion and returned to the cavern. As one might suppose, the whole country rose up; the murderers were besieged in their den, and after a desperate resistance taken and hanged. But Parliament removed the court nevertheless to Presteigne, where it still sits, alternately there and at New Radnor.

Rhayader, like most of Wales, was gloriously loyal during the Great Rebellion, and a "Court of Inquisition" was accordingly held by the rebellious Parliament to confiscate "the patrimonial inheritance of the man Charles Stuart."

But interesting as Rhayader can be when you dive into her story, she has much beside history to offer you. A multitude of walks, for instance, that all alike beggar description, leading you as they do among some of the most lovely scenery in South Wales. I know of few ways, for

instance, more splendid than that which takes you to the top of Guastadyn, the great hill to the south of the town on the left bank of Wye, where it takes a great turn south-west. You follow the road to Builth and then take the road to the left past the rather dismal Workhouse: thence, after passing through the gate across the road, you take the first way to the left up the fields. Presently the path brings you out on the open hillside, and when the road turns away left, keep to the right up to the ridge after crossing a small stream. At the top is a cairn built in 1890. It is not to see that, however, that you have come so far, but to see the hills. If you be lucky you may see them all—Radnor Forest to the east; the Black Mountains, the very sign manual of Siluria, to the south; Brecon Beacons, Gemrhiw, Druggan Cwmdeuddwr Hill, Plynlimon, Cader Idris, and even Snowdon.

But after all, I suppose the chief sight to be seen from Rhayader is the Birmingham Water Works and Dams. They sound prosaic enough, but on inspection prove really none so bad. Here is our modern form of Romance, and it is tremendous enough to astonish and impress even the most convinced rebel against modernity.

These vast reservoirs lie in the Elan Valley, and I should say that it is a matter of some nine

miles to visit the upper lakes. Here in this still beautiful, secluded valley Shelley came in 1811 on a visit to Mrs. Grove.

"I am more astonished at the grandeur of the scenery," Shelley wrote to Hogg at the end of July in that year, "than I expected. I do not *now* much regard it; I have other things to think of." As a fact, he was thinking of making that unlucky marriage with Harriet Westbrook. As it happened, he returned with her to Cwm Elan in the following year, when he first met Peacock.

"As late as 1878," writes Professor Dowden, "a tourist to Cwm Elan who loved the poetry of Shelley and knew the story of his life [Mr. W. J. Craig] came at Nantgwillt upon an old woman who remembered a visitor at Mr. Grove's house when she was a little girl and carried the poet's bag—'a very strange gentleman'—one who on week-days wore a little cap and had his neck bare, but went on Sundays in a tall hat, and so nice-looking, with the family to church; who bought for her at the sale at Nantgwillt House the little pass kettle on which she had set her heart—'him that put the five-pound note in the boat.' Who could the strange gentleman have been but Shelley? and in the memory of Elizabeth Jones probably the reminiscences

of Shelley's visits of 1811 and 1812 had run together. He loved, she said, to sail in the rapid mountain streams a wooden boat about a foot in length, and would run along the banks using a pole to direct his craft and keep it from shipwreck on the rocks. On one memorable occasion a bank-note served as a sail, and little Elizabeth wished it had been hers. Once the young gentleman provided a captain and a coxswain for his boat in the person of a cat; and she remembered his wild peals of laughter—for he was full of fun—when the cat, proving an unwilling sailor, leaped from the shallop to a rock and then again from one rock to another until the bank was reached."

Shelley, it will be remembered, wrote a poem in his youth to "A Cat in Distress," but it was not to the coxswain cat of Cwm Elan. There, however, he wrote some mighty poor verse, including a longish affair in rhymed couplets called "The Retrospect: Cwm Elan, 1812. The house in which he lived, as well as Nantgwillt House, is gone—submerged in the lake to give the Birmingham folk a fine harvest of water.

It was in 1892 that Birmingham, following Liverpool in this, decided to get its water in Wales. In choosing the Rhayader water they

did well, for as Mr. Williams, the historian of the county, reminds us—

> "The fairest children Wales can have
> Are they that drink bright Bwgey's wave."

The Town Council of Birmingham then began to build the great dams we see, which were finished in 1907, at a cost of some nine millions sterling.

The lowest reservoir stretching from Caban Coch to Clawdd du Mawr, is dammed by a wall 122 feet high and thick and 566 feet in length. Over this, one of the finest waterfalls in Great Britain may be seen. The Birmingham water leaves the reservoir at Careg-ddu on the Radnorshire side, a place which, with its submerged dam, is well worth seeing; while the aqueduct that begins there and goes to Birmingham is seventy-three miles long. The two supply reservoirs are also stupendous works, each holding respectively thirteen hundred million gallons and two thousand million gallons of water; while the Caban Coch reservoir holds some eight thousand million gallons, having an area of 500 acres and some 822 feet depth of water.[1] This marvel might seem

[1] Minute particulars will be found in the excellent little penny Guide to Rhayader, written by Rev. L. H. Evans

to have spoiled the scenery. As a fact, it has not done so. The world is glorious there still, and it is a pity that all our modern contrivances cannot be as well carried out.

and Ralph Darlington and published by the Rhayader Town Improvement Committee.

V

TO BUILTH

ON leaving Rhayader by the road on the left bank, which closely follows the river as far as Newbridge, we remain all the way in Radnorshire; but with the river Elan, which joins the Wye at Wern-newydd on the right bank of the stream, the Wye again becomes a boundary between two counties—that of Radnor on the left and Brecknock on the right.

Below Rhayader the whole character of the Wye changes; it becomes the sylvan stream backed by the great hills, which it remains till it reaches Erwood, or even Boughrood, many miles below Builth. No one, I suppose, can withhold his admiration from this part of the river, which in its less astonishing beauty is less known, it is true, but not less consoling than the famous reaches between Ross and Monmouth. Without having lost altogether its mountain character, the Wye here really becomes a river of the valley,

which, narrow as it is, and not the less lovely on that account, is embowered in woods and shadowed by the great and beautiful hills on either side.

The first place of importance that greets us as we make our way down the valley from Rhayader is the village of Llanwrthwl, on the Brecknockshire bank. It is dedicated to an unknown and discarded Welsh Saint, Mwrthwl, of whom nothing can truly be said. Mr. Theophilus Jones, in his History of Brecknockshire, seems to identify him with a personage he finds in the Triads, "to whom our very early ancestors own themselves indebted for the art of building in stone and mortar; but he is supposed to live so soon after the Deluge that nothing but absolute necessity and the want of an *accredited* patron for the parish would induce me to drag him from his obscurity; he is called Morddal Gwr Gweilgi, or Morddal, the Man of the Ocean, and, though it would be too much to insist with pertinacity upon the existence of such a person, it is by no means improbable that a stranger from the Continent might have taught the Britons masonry, that out of gratitude for the comforts he conferred his memory may have been revered, and that even a church was dedicated to him, though he lived before the Christian era. From Morddal to

Mwrthwl, a hammer, the transition is easy, and we then have a Saint for this parish." All of which seems very ingenious indeed.

A mile below Llanwrthwl, on the Radnorshire bank, are the beautiful woods of Doldowlod. So winding through this delicious valley we come at last to Newbridge-on-Wye, in Radnorshire. It is a place of little historical interest, a village whose sole claim on our attention is the charm of the scenery in which it is set and the bridge over the river which, a wide stream now, rushes foaming beneath it.

Crossing the bridge, we come, in Brecknockshire, to Llysdinam, a mansion first built by a certain Thomas Huet, Precentor of St. David's and Rector of Cefnllys and Disserth. He died in 1591, and was buried in Llanavan Church, some four miles away on the foothills of the western mountains looking into our valley.

Of Llanavan, which is perhaps scarcely rightly included in the Wye Valley, Giraldus tells us a most strange tale. "It is proper here to mention," says he, "what happened during the reign of Henry I to the Lord of the Castle of Radnor, in the adjoining territory of Builth, who had entered the Church of St. Avan, which is called in the British language Llan Avan, and, without sufficient caution or reverence, had passed the

night there with his hounds. Arising early in the morning, according to the custom of hunters, he found his hounds mad and himself struck blind. After a long, dark and tedious existence he was conveyed to Jerusalem, happily taking care that his inward sight should not in similar manner be extinguished; and there being accoutred and led to the field of battle on horseback, he made a spirited attack upon the enemies of the faith, and, being mortally wounded, closed his life with honour."

We should be more impressed by this horrible tale if we did not find it repeated with variations about a church in Anglesey. However, this country, which Giraldus calls Warthrenion, was full of wonders, and Archbishop Baldwin must have found it difficult to persuade a people so used to miracles to set out for the Holy Land on Crusade if he pursued the usual method of describing the wonders they would see. In this corner of Wales there were enough strange and unaccountable happenings to beggar Palestine.

"Another circumstance," says Giraldus, "which happened in these our days in the province of Warthrenion, distant only from hence a few furlongs, is not unworthy of notice. Eineon, lord of that district and son-in-law to Prince Rhys, who was much addicted to the chase, having on a

certain day forced the wild beasts from their coverts, one of his attendants killed a hind with an arrow as she was springing forth from the wood, which, contrary to the nature of her sex, was found to bear horns of twelve years' growth, and was much fatter than a stag in the haunches as well as in every other part. On account of the singularity of this circumstance the head and horns of this strange animal were destined as a present to King Henry II. This event is the more remarkable as the man who shot the hind suddenly lost the use of his right eye, and, being at the same time seized with a paralytic complaint, remained in a weak and impotent state until the time of his death."

Below Newbridge, if we follow the high-road across the Ithon, we forsake the Wye ; but if we cross that river at Brynwern Bridge we may, by following the lower, keep within the valley all the way to Builth.

Builth is now well known as a watering-place, and is, I believe, winning its way slowly but surely even with us in England as a place nearer home and quite as satisfactory as some of the famous Continental resorts. What, however, is much more to our purpose is the undoubted antiquity of civilization in its neighbourhood, so that the neat little market town of to-day takes on for us

a more reverent aspect than a first glance at it would seem to suggest.

To begin with, all sorts of prehistoric remains, trilobite fossils and what not, have been found on the Welfield Hill and on the mighty mass of Carneddan. Doubtless the cave- and lake-dwellers of remote antiquity were gathered here, for we are told that the strange mounds by Builth Road are the work of man, and in all probability their fortresses and homes. Upon these folk fell that people which is still the true base race of the English people, the long-skulled Iberians with the weapons of stone. We find their long barrows, at once home and tomb maybe, all over the country, and here at Builth are some thirty or more not far from the modern town. Upon us fell the Celts in two avalanches, a fair-haired and blue-eyed race living in round huts and burying one another in round graves. The remains of these also we find in the neighbourhood of Builth.

How long these Celts had established themselves as masters in Britain before we were brought within the Roman Empire it is impossible to say. But it is certain that we have here in Builth and about it material memories not only of the lake-dwellers, the Iberians from whom we are sprung, and of the Celts who overcame them,

but also of that great European system and Empire which in some sort delivered us from our Celtic masters and established for ever a great civilization in this Island.

We know too little of the Roman occupation of Britain to be sure of much, but it seems probable that the Romans penetrated no further up the valley of the Wye than this town of Builth, which we consider to correspond more or less with their station and town of Bulleum Silurum. That they were here is certain, and the discovery of a number of Roman tiles bearing the inscription "Leg II" but confirms us in our knowledge and adds to it.

Something has already been said of the Roman roads in Wales and of their great importance, not only in Roman times but for very many centuries thereafter; we have indeed attributed chiefly to their different character the different fortunes of the Norman conquest in the North and in the South. These roads, the three greater of them, may be said to have started the one in the south from Gloucester, down the Severn Valley to Caerleon, and so by the coast, at any rate so far as the valley of the Neath. That on the north starting from Chester also followed the coast to Carnarvon. These two great roads were joined by the great Sarn Helen, that traversed Wales

from north to south some ten or fifteen miles from the coast over the great hills. But beside these three major highways there were, we may be sure, many lesser and later ways which gradually penetrated into the interior of the country, and it is upon one of these we come at Builth. The great southern road which we can trace from Caerleon through Cardiff to the valley of the Neath seems there to have turned northward up the valley after crossing the river and to have made for the town of Brecon-upon-Usk. Brecon was a considerable place, a meeting-place of roads. A way, for instance, seems to have led thence to Carmarthen, where the great Sarn Helen came to an end, and another road may still be traced going northward across the Honddu River, and crossing the Wye just above Builth, where there was a camp at Castell Lechryd on the Ithon. Parts of this road, both to the north-east and south-west of Builth, on either side the river, are still visible.

By Builth the river was reached on the Radnor side by a causeway that is still used across the marsh; while at Builth Road the mound was certainly fortified, and at Castel Lechryd there was a fortified camp surrounded by a deep and wide fosse or ditch and a high rampart, enclosing some ten acres. Mr. Williams, writing in the

middle of the nineteenth century, thus describes it: "The entrenchment at this time is in many places full of water, and the quality of the soil is marshy. The foss, or trench, was at least twenty feet wide and six or seven feet high, and could be filled with water, which a small rill supplied. No internal trench appears at present. To the west of this fortification several circular mounds of earth have been thrown up, on which are no marks of entrenchment as they appear at present; but these may have been obliterated by the plough, as cultivation has been carried up to their summit. These mounds, or hillocks, seem well calculated to serve as outposts or stations of observation, commanding a view of the vale of the Wye both to the east and west of the principal fortification, as far as the winding of the river and the obstruction of intervening hills will admit. This station seems judiciously selected for the purpose of surprising an enemy advancing up the line of the river Wye, and, indeed, appears more fitted to hold an army of reserve than for any other purpose. Ill adapted for defence or to repel the common enemy, it seems more appropriated to the ill-fated purpose of deciding the intestine quarrels which, unhappily for the independence of Wales, too often prevailed among its chieftains and princes."

But the Legions departed, Roman civilization sank into barbarism, and the Barbarians themselves descended upon the furthest province of the Empire with more complete and terrible effect than anywhere else within it. The Saxons, however, so far as we know, never penetrated to Builth, and it is but a rumour we have of a Danish incursion. A British civilization, barbarous and little if any more polite than that which obtained in England in the Dark Ages, flourished here, a decadent civilization destined to death and to be replaced by that which the Normans were to bring from Europe. Of this British period we have almost no knowledge, but the laws of Howel Dda, about 950, probably a feeble imitation of the work of Charlemagne, were observed in Builth, and there was a court of some sort at Llechryd.

With the Norman Conquest all this was to be changed. At that time Builth and its country was in the hands of a chief named Elystan Glodrydd, but towards the end of the century Bernard Newmarch, who had been at Hastings, took Brecon, and built a castle there. Among his companions was Philip de Braose, who, penetrating further into the mountains, defeated Elystan Glodrydd, and seized his lordship. It was probably to secure himself and his conquest

that the first Norman Castle of Builth was built, though we have no certain knowledge of this.

The castle stood on the Brecknockshire side of the Wye, at the foot of the lofty and picturesque bridge that gives character to the town to-day. Nothing now remains of any castle. In the twelfth century, however, it must have been the greatest spectacle in all this valley between Rhayader and Hay, and in many ways greater than either of them.

William de Braose, son of Philip, married Bertha de Newmarch, and thus became master of a vast country, including Brecon, Abergavenny, and Builth. His son, William, was a terrific personage. In 1176 he invited a number of Welsh chiefs to his castle of Abergavenny "to confer in peace." He murdered them all and sacked their homesteads, in revenge, he said, for the death of his uncle, Henry of Hereford. In 1195 he was with Richard I in Normandy, and in 1198 he was besieged in Castle Maud, but relieved in time. With John, too, he went to Normandy, and there had a grant "of all such lands as he should conquer from the Welsh in increase of his barony of Radnor." Presently he was in possession of Hereford and Hay as well as Radnor, Brecon, Builth, and half a dozen other strongholds. He fled to France at

last, where he died, for he sided with the Barons against John, who, getting hold of his wife, Maud de Haye, with her eldest son, starved them to death in the prisons of Windsor Castle.

William's younger son, Giles, Bishop of Hereford, was one of the five bishops who withdrew to France with the Primate. On Giles' death the Braose property passed to Reginald, who married Gwladys, daughter of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth. For some time Reginald and his father-in-law fought against John, but in 1217 Reginald sided with the new king, Henry III. His Welsh subjects rebelled, and Llywelyn came to their assistance, and attacked Brecon. For a time he succeeded, but the withdrawal of Louis of France changed the aspect of affairs, and Llywelyn was obliged to make his submission and to restore much of what he had conquered. After the war with the younger William Marshall in 1221, Llywelyn once more found himself face to face with Reginald, whom he now besieged in Builth Castle. A royal army, accompanied by the young king in person, marched to its relief. The Welsh fled on its approach, and before long Reginald died.

Now Reginald had one son, William, who had married Eva, daughter of William Marshall, Llywelyn's old enemy. In 1228 Llywelyn cap-

tured William in a fight at Kerry, in Montgomery. He purchased his freedom in the following year for three thousand marks and the promise of his daughter Isabel to Llywelyn's son David, with Builth as her marriage portion, and an engagement not to fight Llywelyn for the future. Affairs thus sufficiently confused were rendered worse confounded by the fact that William in his captivity had won the love of Llywelyn's wife, Joan, and had enjoyed her. Partly in revenge of this new wrong, and partly to wipe off old scores, Llywelyn's men seized William again at Easter in 1230. They brought him to Llywelyn, who openly hanged him at Crokean on 2 May. Thus Builth came into Llywelyn's hands, and was, of course, a source of new disputes, for Henry granted it to his brother, Richard of Cornwall. But the Braose family thought otherwise, and William's Radnor and Builth properties were claimed by his daughter Maud, who married Roger de Mortimer. As a fact, however, the king had kept Builth in his own gift since the attainder of the elder William de Braose, and though the Mortimers came to own the lordships of Builth they were only custodians of the castle.

In 1260 Llewelyn ab Gruffyd, grandson of Llewelyn the Great, overran the region about Builth, and later took the castle from Roger

Mortimer, owing to the treachery of some of the garrison. Mortimer was acquitted of blame by the king, though Prince Edward seems to have suspected him. Rhys ab Gruffyd then became custodian for Llewelyn, but the Mortimers would not let him be, and this interference increased as the years went on, till soon after the accession of Edward I Llewelyn found it best to abandon the place, after burning the castle to the ground.

Thus perished the old fortress. In 1277 Edward I began building a magnificent new concentric castle, an example of the finest and greatest age of castle-building. This magnificent work took five years to complete. It was said to be the most splendid and the strongest defensive work in the whole country, and, in fact, it was never taken. As I have said, not a stone is left. "One would think," writes Mr. J. E. Morris in his "Welsh Wars of Edward I," "one would think that one was visiting some circular British encampment. The top of the grassy mound shows where stood the central round keep of which our documents speak; a circular moat gives the site of the curtain and six towers of the middle ward; a circular outer moat indicates the advanced ward where two towers, doubtless like, but smaller than, those of Chepstow, guarded the main gateway. It must have been a perfect

specimen of a concentric castle, exactly occupying its mound, having no weak side, small enough to be defended by a reasonable garrison of sixty or seventy men."

The stone to build it was brought from Cusop Quarry, and lead from Nantros by the Elan Valley. The master of the works was a priest, John of Radnor. When he had built Builth he was rewarded with the living of Llandefeclog-fach. The captain of the garrison was a certain Howel ap Merrick during the completion. He died in 1281, and was succeeded by Robert l'Estrange. In 1282 it was finished, and John Giffard, once the ally of Llywelyn at Lewes, was brought from Llandovery Castle to take command. The tragedy which now befell is heightened by remembering that fact, and also that Giffard's wife was Maud Longespee, and related to Llywelyn. Broken by Edward, harried by Mortimer, Llywelyn is said to have been invited by Giffard to take refuge at Builth. He came with eighteen men to his castle of Aberedw, not far away, where he spent the night. There he was attacked by l'Estrange and Roger Mortimer, who were in the plot with Giffard. He escaped to a cave hard by. In the morning of a day not long after he set out for Builth, only to find it held close against him. Having destroyed

the bridge, for his own men held the ford, he made for Pont-y-Coed, and, holding it, made for Llanfair. But Mortimer and l'Estrange crossed the Wye at Erwood. They attacked the ford held by Llywelyn's eighteen men, whom they greatly outnumbered. All the eighteen fell, and Llywelyn, rushing to their assistance, was killed by a certain Adam, a Welshman in the l'Estrange service, who did not know him. When he was recognized his head was sent to London and carried through the city, crowned with ivy, and finally placed on the Tower to rot. His body is said to lie at Abbey Cwmhir.

Builth and the people of Builth got a bad name for that day's work in Wales. They were known as "the traitors of Builth." But, in fact, if there were any treason it lay with Giffard, Mortimer, and l'Estrange, who seem to have paid the Welsh that time in their own coin, at least, if we may believe Giraldus; at any rate they served their master, the great Edward, well and truly, and were rewarded with his usual generosity.

Builth Castle was held for the future by a l'Estrange or a Mortimer very often. During Owen Glendower's rebellion, however, Sir John Oldcastle, the Lollard, held it, and Henry VII gave it to his son Arthur, Prince of Wales. It

seems to have been destroyed in Elizabeth's time, for Leland saw it, by Charles Walcot, a Shropshire man. The present Lord Glenesk holds the lordships of Builth.

So much for the castle. As for the town, it was granted a charter by Edward I in 1278, but it was never of any great importance. In 1691 it was burnt to the ground, and to-day by far the oldest building in it is the tower of the church.

Dedicated to S. Mary, it was the scene of a sermon preached by John Wesley in 1743, and it was in this neighbourhood that Charles Wesley wrote one of his best-known hymns, "Jesu, Lover of my soul"—"to comfort his wife's old nurse in her last illness."

In the church is the effigy of John Lloyd of Towy, a Tudor monument with an interesting inscription.

A little to the south-east of Builth, on the Radnor side of the river, below the town, is the village of Llanelwedd, which commemorates the name of S. Elwedd. The church, which so far as tower and chancel go is largely of the fourteenth century, is small but charming, and the churchyard gives a lovely view both up and down stream.

VI

TO THE HAY

IN pursuing one's way from Builth down the valley the pleasanter road from that town to Erwood Station follows along the Radnorshire bank of the Wye through Llanelwedd, of which we have already spoken, through Llanfaredd, with its little Church of S. Mary, to Aberedw, one of the loveliest spots on the river, where the Edw joins the Wye under great cliffs clothed in gorgeous woods. I know of nothing finer, nothing more perfect in its own fashion, than this reach of the Wye from Builth to Erwood or Boughrood. It is less known—for boating is even here impossible—than the famous reaches below Ross, but it deserves to have the reputation they enjoy. At Aberedw, for instance, the rocks, some 500 feet high, are, I suppose, among the most tremendous cliffs in the kingdom, and the woods, too, are not less fine than those about Courtfield or Symonds Yat; rather are they seen

here to a greater advantage, for the valley is narrow—not much more than a great gorge—and the river seems to run completely in their shadow, yet joyfully and with a song.

Aberedw, if we may believe the evidence of our eyes, was already very ancient when Duke William landed at Pevensey. On a hill close to Llwyn-y-Moylin are to be found three large tumuli set not in a straight line, but to form a triangle, the sides of which extend about 300 yards equally. Each tumulus is surrounded by a deep fosse and high vallum, which suggest the military nature of the construction.

But the dear little village of Aberedw possesses the remains of a more recent castle than these barrows would remind us of. For on the way from the station to the church, on a hill, guarded on the north and east by the Edw and on the west by the Wye, are the almost vanished ruins of a small castle of whose foundation we know nothing at all. It is supposed, however, on very meagre authority to have been built by Radulphus de Baskerville, the Lord of Yerdisley, a family which came into England with William the Conqueror. The Baskervilles were deprived of the Castle of Aberedw by Rhys ap Tewdwr and by Llewelyn ap Gruffyd, the latter occasionally making the place his residence, as we

have seen. In the reign of King Henry II, Mr. Williams tells us, Sir Ralph Baskerville of Aberedw married Drogo, a daughter of Lord Clifford of Clifford Castle. A dispute arose between them about some property of which Baskerville had dispossessed his father-in-law. A challenge followed, and they fought at a place near Hereford, where later a white cross was erected, which remained in Elizabeth's time. The event of the duel proved fatal to Lord Clifford, and Sir Ralph bought of the Pope a pardon, not for patricide, but for killing his man in a churchyard! Duelling seems, however, to have been a favourite method with the Baskervilles for obtaining whatever they desired. The Court of Aberedw, the later residence of that ancient family, reminds us of this, for James Baskerville, the grandfather of the last heiress, killed Colonel Powell or Lloyd in a duel in Presteigne. It all arose out of a cock-fight. Cock-fighting was formerly, as we know, a favourite and popular diversion pursued by gentlemen. About the middle of the eighteenth century a main of cocks was fought at the Oak Inn in Broad Street in Presteigne for a considerable wager by Colonel Powell or Lloyd of Boultebrook and James Baskerville of Aberedw Court. "High words arose betwixt

the two contending parties; they withdrew into the yard of the inn to settle their dispute; swords were drawn, and the former gentleman was run through the body and died on the spot. The bringing of weapons so dangerous to such a place can only be accounted for on the score that a personal combat had previously been concerted by the parties." The Baskervilles were desperate fellows at pinking their opponents. It is curious to note that James Baskerville's granddaughter, the last heiress, conveyed Aberedw Court by marriage to the Rev. John Powell of Clirow Court. It would be interesting to know if the Rev. John Powell were any relation to Colonel Powell or Lloyd who met his death in the yard of the Oak Inn.

But to return to Aberedw Castle. As we have seen, the place came at last into the hands of Llewelyn, the last Prince of Wales. It was to Aberedw he came when invited to Builth by Giffard, and it was there he was attacked by Mortimer and l'Estrange. He escaped from that battery, as we have seen, and took refuge in a cave still to be seen some quarter of a mile away in the woods across the Edw. This remarkable cavern or grotto has been cut out of the solid rock by the hand of man, and it measures some six feet every way. The mouth is very

narrow. Altogether it might seem that it was designed as a place of refuge, and it may well be many hundreds of years older than the Norman Conquest. Tradition has it that it was in this very cave that Llewelyn hid. He was betrayed, it is said, by the Aberedw blacksmith, who had shoed his horse with the irons turned. Mortimer and l'Estrange thus warned had the foresight to cross the river at Erwood, where there was a good ford, and where the road on the Brecknockshire side of the Wye was always, as it is to-day, better than the byway on the Radnor bank. The result we know, and, since it made way for our brotherhood with the Welsh, cannot pretend to regret. After all, whatever sentimental right Llewelyn may have had to attempt to found an independent kingdom in Wales—and that was doubtless his intention—it cannot have been either beneficial or tolerable that such a state of anarchy as had obtained in Wales for centuries could be endured for ever. Edward I saw this, and was determined to hold Wales as he held England, without intermediaries. He achieved his end, and neither England nor Wales has ever had cause to regret it.

The Church of Aberedw, dedicated to S. Gewydd, is well worth a visit if only to see the two large and aged yews in the churchyard.

They remind us of the early prowess of the Welsh friendlies in the use of the bow long before it was properly understood in England. Indeed, according to Mr. J. E. Morris, the fields of Creçy and Poictiers were won in the Welsh Marches every bit as much as Waterloo was won on the Eton playing-fields, and that fact I hope none of us may ever come to doubt.

Near the ruins of the old castle stands a very ancient corn mill driven by the Edw. It is the property of the Crown of England and was possibly used by the Romans; certainly it has ground Norman stuff. It is opposite this mill, on the other side of the Edw, that those splendid rocks stand which are among the most magnificent in the kingdom. They follow the river for at least a mile, in their various forms as majestic a sight as anything this valley affords in its entire length.

Opposite Aberedw, on the Brecknockshire bank of the Wye, is the village of Alltmawr under its great woody mount.

We follow down stream till at Erwood Station we ought to notice the great hill with the village of Llandeilo Graban above us. Upon the summit of this hill is a small camp, nearly circular, in a high state of preservation. It has one entrance, on the east. The ascent to the camp

is very steep on all sides, and a small garrison might defend it against an army. "It is handed down by tradition," says Mr. Williams, "and even gravely asserted by Welsh chroniclers that the traitor and usurper, Gurtherin Gwrthenan, after his deposition retreated into the wilds of Radnorshire, denominated Elfael, and there for some time eluded the vengeance of his countrymen." He wishes to identify this as his place of hiding.

Erwood with its inn and beautiful woods is on the further side of the river. We shall not cross, however, but proceed on our way to Boughrood, a place quite as lovely as Erwood.

Boughrood, or Boughrhyd Castle, was built, according to Mr. Williams, by Eineon Clyd, Lord of Elfael, and on its site the Ffoulke family have built a fine modern house. The parish has passed through the hands of many. In 1140 it was the property of Eineon Clyd, as we have said. He was the younger brother of Cadwallon, Lord of Moelynaidd, who was murdered on his return from Cardiganshire. The Normans then possessed themselves of it, and later it came into the hands of the Bishop of Hereford, who restored it to Eineon's son, Walter Fychan. Little remains but the moat from those days. The Church of Boughrood

is dedicated to S. Cynog and contains nothing remarkable.

Below Boughrood we cross the river to Llyswen, which means the White Court, or rather the Fair Palace, and was so called because it was formerly one of the mansions of the Princes of South Wales. This "gorgeous palace," as Theophilus Jones calls it, has long since disappeared, and not a stone is left of it. It was there Roderick the Great appointed the Princes of Cardigan and Powis to meet to settle any disputes which might occur between them, which were to be decided by the Prince of Aberffraw.

It is here that the Wye changes its character again and becomes a true river. The valley opens, the great Black Mountains come into the view, and wide meadows begin to open on either bank. Through these the Wye, now broad and soon to be deep, sweeps towards the east into the splendid valley in whose bosom lies Hereford, the English gate of South Wales.

From Llyswen we proceed to Pipton and Aberllynfi, and so to the famous Three Cocks Inn, where it is good to stay—the very best inn in all this country. It is an ancient L-shaped house by the side of the high-road, the old rest-

ing-place of fishermen and a famous post-house in our fathers' days. Thence we proceed to Glasbury Station, crossing the Wye by the bridge into Glasbury, or Clâsbury as it was anciently called.

A curiosity of this parish is that it violates the boundary of the Wye and stretches itself on both sides of the stream, being situated both in Radnor and Brecknock. The church, however, is in Brecknock. The Radnorshire part of Clâsbury was, it seems, a part of the conquered territory which Bernard de Newmarch, Norman Lord of Brecknock and Buallt, obtained of Cardigan, the Welsh Lord of Elfael, Moelynaidd, and Cerri, and was annexed to his larger property situated on the left bank of the river. On the formation of the four new counties of South Wales in the reign of Henry VIII, this baronial arrangement was adhered to, and Radnorshire and Brecknockshire Clâsbury were made to constitute one parish ; each, however, maintaining its own poor, raising its own quota of militia, and assessing its own rates, and the inhabitants of both having an equal right to the use and service of the church, which, as we have said, is in Brecknockshire.

Little remains in Clâsbury of antiquity. It never seems to have had a castle. This probably because it was close to several very famous ones,

namely Painscastle and Maud's Castle—to say nothing of Bronllys and Boughrood, all of which, save the last, however, outside, though within reach, of the Wye Valley.

At Clâsbury we cross Wye, as I have said, and proceed down stream past the modern mansion of Maellswch Castle to Llowes, a pretty place enough, containing some relics of remote antiquity. Besides the encampments that are numerous in the district, the farmhouse called Caer is built in the area of a Roman Camp, while a Roman road seems hereabout to have forded the stream. Something perhaps older than this remains in the churchyard. This is an immense stone, standing erect about seven yards high, two yards broad, and six feet thick, carved into the semblance of a human form. On its breast is a great circle divided by rich sculpture. In the centre of the circle is a lozenge, repeated in the lower part of the body together with triangles. It is supposed to represent the British goddess of war, Malaen. The tradition goes, however, that a certain woman of enormous strength and size, called Moll Walbre, threw this vast fragment out of her shoe from Clifford Castle across Wye. This lady in reality seems to have been the great Maud de Saint Valery, of whom we shall have something to say when we speak of Hay.

From Llowes we follow the road to Clyro, and then taking the road on the left, cross the river again into Hay. Clyro is an ancient place once in the possession of Eineon Clyd, Lord of Elfael. A certain Roger Vaughan, an ancestor of the late Cardinal, owned Clyro in 1580, when he was High Sheriff of Radnorshire. His family seat was called Court of Clyro, and was a fine old mansion. It is now fallen into a mere farmhouse, though the ancient embattled gateway and arch over the road to the house still remain on the north.

Clyro seems to have had a castle in the old days. At any rate, on the hill to the south there are remains that suggest it and that still offer a fine prospect of the valley both east and west. It has been suggested, however, that the ruins may be those of a monastery.

From Clyro we cross the valley and the river into Hay, or, better, The Hay—the last town in our valley in Wales, for if we cross the Dulas that here joins Wye we are in England. On the Radnorshire side, however, Wales goes further east, and it is not till we are four miles out of Clyro that we cross the frontier at Rhydspence.

The Hay nevertheless is English enough, though for that matter so is all this country as

far west as Three Cocks at least, speaking the good Hereford tongue, which is among the best I know, and has much in common as the red soil has with my own West Country.

The name of this place seems to have puzzled Camden, and according to Theophilus Jones, "many others who have followed him." Hay, in Welsh Tregelli, "which," says Camden, "in English we may render Hasleton or Haseley, lyes on the banks of the River Wye upon the borders of Herefordshire—a place which seems to have been well known to the Romans, since we often find coins there and some ruins of walls are still remaining, but now being almost totally decayed, it complains of the outrages of that profligate rebel Glyndowrdwy, who in his march through these countries consumed it with fire." There is, according to Theophilus Jones, "no difficulty in defining the word Hay: Haye or Haie in Norman-French from *haier*, to inclose, meant at first the hedge or inclosure itself and then the ground enclosed. Haia in the jargon of the law, the Saxon Haez from whence hedge and Celli and Gelli (a substantive singular) in Welsh all mean the same thing—an enclosed park containing wood or boscage within a fence or pale." He instances "Dominus Rex habet unam capellam in Haia

sua de Kingesse."[1] Hay was certainly a walled town.

From the same author we learn that the parish church was that dedicated to Saint John, but the dedication, "translated literally by a Welshman from Eglwys Ifan into Church Ienan or Evan, sounded so smoothly to some English ears, that they never transposed the words to make them suit their own idiom." This church was in good repair so late as 1684, and was then used as a school-house. It fell down in part in 1700 and was never rightly repaired.

The Church of S. Mary which the people of the Hay now use is at the west of the town across a dingle or valley once maybe used as a moat. It is a small place well situated on a height precipitous on the north-west. The interior is very pleasing; but the finest thing left to it is a silver chalice, which is of good antiquity and bears the inscription, "Our Lady Paris(h) of the Haià." In the churchyard is a stone effigy, partly buried, of the redoubtable and beautiful Moll Walbre or Maud de St. Valery, wife of William de Braose.

Leland agrees with Camden that the Romans had something to do with Hay; modern scholars, however, do not seem to agree with them, and it

[1] Bracton, Lib. II, cap. 40, No. 3.

is a fact that nothing on modern record has been found there or thereabout to warrant us in assuming them to be right.

It was evening when Leland came to Hay, and he seems to have missed his road. He came down from "the *Blake montaine* and saw on the hither side of Wy, a good mile from the Hay, the castle of Clereho, after passing over Wy river, the which for lack of good knowledge yn me of the fourde did sore troble my horse, and I cam in *crepusculo* to the Hay." On this confusing passage Theophilus Jones remarks: He should have said *noctu*, for no man in the daylight with his eyes open would cross the Wye in his journey from the Black Mountain to Hay, as they are both on the same side of the river. The truth is [our Theophilus continues], if he ever was in this country, like modern tourists, he reserved his description of it for two or three days after he had travelled through, when he had a confused idea of black mountains and moulder-ing castles and perils by land and by water, and in his sore trouble he forgot that his entrance into Hay was from Radnorshire and not on the Breconshire side of the town." Which is all very true. And how else, I should like to know, is "the modern tourist" or any one else to write his account of his travels save "two or three

days after"? God knows travelling is either such a sorry affair, as too often, or such a delight, as in some countries I know of, that it is altogether impossible to compose oneself to write a sober account by the wayside. It is just these two or three days after that make all well.

Among other less notable facts, Leland tells us that in Hay "there was a castel, the which some time hath been right stately. This castle, of which we see the remnants to-day, is generally thought to have been built by that great and beautiful lady Maud de St. Valery or De Haye, the wife of William de Braose. This lady, who was very proud and arrogant as well as beautiful, is said to have been largely the cause through ill-advice of her husband's downfall. She paid heavily for her pride; for King John got hold of her and imprisoned her, as I have already said, at Windsor with her eldest son, and there he starved them to death.

She must, however, have been living and in possession of Hay, her castle, when Giraldus came with the archbishop to preach the Crusade in 1188. They preached in Hay, and "we observed some amongst the multitude, who were to be signed with the cross (leaving their garments in the hands of their friends or wives

who endeavoured to keep them back), fly for refuge to the archbishop in the castle."

Hay Castle is little noticed in the Welsh Chronicles, and certainly by 1231 it was in the King of England's hands and destroyed, though Henry III is said to have refortified it later, and Llewelyn the Great took it. In 1263 it was taken from the Welsh by Prince Edward, and in the fifteenth century Owen Glendower burnt it. What we see is chiefly of the time of the Stuarts. But if we regard the situation of those castles we have already spoken of with this of Hay and some others, as Painscastle especially, we cannot fail to be struck by the policy which contrived this chain of fortresses, which secured admirably a contact with Radnor and Huntington in the rear, and in front with Builth, thus separating the territory of Elvael from that of Moelynaidd and holding the whole county by a communication with Hay. It is these castles which first decided the fate of Wales; they prepared the way and held it, and when Edward came he had here in the south but to make sure for the crown what was already in English hands.

What remains of Hay Castle to-day is charming enough, but it must have been a very different building that the Lady of Hay built, of which

what little is left leads us to imagine a splendid and terrible fortress.

The Dulas—the pretty Dulas Leland calls it—divides Hay into two parts, of which Haya Anglicana, or English Hay, is a mere hamlet; while Haya Wallensis, or Welsh Hay, is the town itself.

Two excursions from Hay should on no account be missed. The one is to the little village of Cusop on the Dulas. It has a Castle and a delicious Dingle, of which we have already spoken; a churchyard with some splendid yews, and a martyr's tomb, namely that of William Seward, who was here stoned to death while preaching.

The other excursion is to Mouse Castle, an old Welsh fortress, now a complete ruin, from which some splendid views may be had of our valley.

VII

THE STORY OF HEREFORDSHIRE TO THE UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

I HAVE said that Hay is a frontier town, the last town in Wales, and that as soon as you have crossed the Dulas you are in Herefordshire, in England. Before following our river in its course through England, through that famous English county, it may be perhaps as well to discuss what the Shire of Hereford has stood for in the history of England. In extent as in richness one of the lesser counties of England, in historical and political interest it is one of the first, for it is one of those three districts in which were set the three English gates into Wales—I mean Chester in the north, Shrewsbury in the centre, and Hereford in the south—and though Hereford was not so tremendous a port as Shrewsbury, it has had at least as great an influence upon the history of Wales and its relation to us.

Its boundaries are clear. On the north it is separated from Shropshire and the upper Severn Valley by a considerable range of hills, to the south it is separated from Monmouthshire by the Monnow, while to the west lies Wales, the great mountains springing up on the very confines of our county. The Wye itself divides Herefordshire into two unequal parts, that on the north being the greater and the more important. To the south of the Wye lie those districts or frontiers we used to call in the far-away days when there was always war hereabout Archenfield and Stradel; and these divisions very happily coincide with the present ecclesiastical divisions of the county—the Church keeping in our memory so much we would but for her forget—the Archdeaconaries of Irchenfield and the Golden Valley.

When the Romans came they found Herefordshire in the possession of the Silures; the exact definition of the whole of the territory is doubtful, but it would seem largely to correspond to that part of Wales which is within the Sees of Llandaff and Hereford; and though doubtless it stretched into that part of Wales which is within the See of S. David's, for the most part it lay outside it.

This country, so roughly and doubtfully definable to-day, was attacked by Ortorius Scapula in A.D. 50, who was met by Caractacus. He

could not maintain himself among so fierce a people, however, and it was not till twenty-five years later that the Silures were finally overcome by Sextus Julius Frontinus. Even then we may hardly speak of a final conquest, for this extraordinary race regained their liberty before 411, and it might seem certain that if Arthur had any real existence—and he must have had a real existence—it was from this people he was sprung.

We have only the vaguest of notions as to what happened in England during the Dark Ages which followed the withdrawal of the Legions. Probably Herefordshire was overrun by some Welsh tribe, and it was not till great Offa rose in Mercia that the frontier of England was thrust back upon Wye, and Offa's Dyke established for many hundreds of years as the frontier of Wales.

We shall speak of the Dyke when we come upon it at Bridge Sollers, it will be enough to say here that it entered Hereford near Knighton, and when it reached the Wye followed the left bank of the stream.

After the Saxons the Danes; they reached Herefordshire in the tenth century from the Severn Sea. A hundred years later, when Edward the Confessor sat on the English throne in 1042, Herefordshire was granted to Sweyen,

Godwin's eldest son, who held beside all Oxfordshire, Gloucester, Berkshire, and Somerset. He was a very great lord. He fought with the Welsh, took sides in their quarrels, made the Abbess of Leominster his mistress, and was for this and other offences outlawed, and went out of England. Herefordshire fell either to Ralph, Edward's nephew, or to Harold, Sweyen's brother, we are not sure which; but eventually when the Godwin clan quarrelled with Edward it certainly came into Ralph's hands, and whether on this account or no was immediately ravaged by Gruffyd ap Llywelyn, who had been assisted by Sweyen. In 1055 the Welsh again came burning, and the result of their raids is seen in Domesday Book.[1] Hereford was plundered, the minster burnt, and, according to the Welsh, the citadel destroyed.

Such a disaster called for the interposition of England, and the greatest man in England was sent to avenge it, Earl Harold, who fortified Hereford and crossed into Wales, the Welsh retreating before him. But the peace made in Shropshire did not prevent Gruffyd from again ravaging Herefordshire in the company of the Viking Magnus. Then the Bishop of Hereford,

[1] See V. C. H., "Herefordshire," vol i (1908); E. I. Carlyle, "Political History," p. 353.

Leofgen, rose up only to be slain. But a peace was arranged which gave the county five years respite, till in 1062 they again came burning, but this time Harold was ready for them, and in 1063 he compelled the Welsh to save themselves alive, killing their leader Gruffyd.

There followed, and it was time, the Norman Conquest. At the first shock it seemed as though our county would be utterly at the mercy of the Welsh, but before March, 1067, King William had appointed Fitzosbern Earl of Hereford a count palatine. He gave the country security and a sort of peace, and "modelled the customs of Hereford upon those of his French town of Breteuil." These customs, which became very famous, we shall consider in dealing with the city of Hereford. He had forfeited his earldom, however, before Domesday Book was made, but he had built three great castles beside that he set up in Herefordshire itself. One of these was at Wigmore, which held the north, another was at Clifford, and that held the west, and at Ewyas Harold he built a third to hold the southern frontier towards the west. This done, feeling safe, he began the conquest of South Wales, with the help of Walter de Lacy.[1] In achieving this he built Monmouth Castle and Caerleon. William

[1] V. C. H., *op. cit.*, p. 356.

of Malmesbury, speaking of this great man, says he "might have been compared, nay, I know not if he might not have been preferred, to the very best princes. By his advice William [the king] had first been inspirited to invade and next assisted by his valour to keep possession of England. The energy of his mind was seconded by the almost boundless liberality of his hand. Hence it arose that by the multitude of soldiers, to whom he gave extravagant pay, he repelled the rapacity of the enemy and ensured the favour of the people. In consequence, by his boundless profusion, he incurred the king's severe displeasure; because he had improvidently exhausted his treasures. The regulations which he established in his county of Hereford remain in full force at the present day; that is to say, that no knight (miles) should be fined more than seven shillings for any offence whatever; whereas in other provinces for a very small offence in transgressing the commands of their lord they pay twenty or twenty-five. Fortune, however, closed these happy successes by a dishonourable termination when the supporter of so great a government, the counsellor of England and Normandy, went into Flanders through fond regard for a woman, and there died by the hands of his enemies."

William Fitzosbern was followed in the earldom by his son, Roger de Breteuil, of whom William of Malmesbury has nothing to say but evil. It seems that he and Ralph, Fitzosbern's son-in-law, the Earl of Norfolk, led the first Norman revolt in 1075 against the central government. For this rebellion he forfeited his lands and was imprisoned for life. The king kept the earldom in his own hands. The result was that certain local families grew in strength, among them, and chiefly, Lacy and Mortimer. Walter de Lacy held lands on the border of Ewyas, Ralph de Mortimer held Wigmore. They, too, in the next reign rebelled against the Crown, and even seized the city of Hereford, with help of a Scrupe and a Newmarch, both Marcher lords. They were flung back from Worcester and broken. Lacy was pardoned, only to fall again for the same cause in 1095, when he was banished, and his brother Hugh got his lands. But about fifty years later the Fitzosberns, in the person of William's granddaughter, Amicia, who had married Robert de Beaumont, Earl of Leicester, seemed about to return to Hereford, for Stephen had granted the earldom to that lord on the same terms as the Crown had granted it to Fitzosbern, save that "four great tenants-in-chief were excepted from it, namely,

Hugh de Mortimer, Osbert Fitzhugh, William de Braose, and Joce de Dinan," whose fief had formerly been Hugh de Lacy's.

De Beaumont never entered his lordship, and in 1140 Matilda created Miles of Gloucester earl. This was a new creation "without palatine powers."

This Miles was succeeded by his son Roger, whose power in the March was shared with Hugh de Mortimer;[1] between them they held southern Shropshire and Herefordshire.

With Henry II a new power comes on the scene, and the king resumed the earldom on Roger's death, and attacked Mortimer at Wigmore, Bridgenorth, and Cleobury, with the result that he gave up the two former and saw the last burnt. In 1158 the king came to Hereford. It is now that the true division between the English shire and the March becomes apparent. "Geographically," says Mr. Carlyle, "the shire included the lordships of Wigmore and Lugharness in the north-west, those of Clifford, Winforton, Stapleton Eardisley, Whitney, and Huntington in the west, that of Ewyas Harold on the south-west. But the power of the sheriff extended over none

[1] V. C. H., *ubi cit.*, p. 302. I must acknowledge here, once for all, my general and particular indebtedness to the learned article of Mr. Carlyle.

of these districts, nor were they organized in hundreds."

With King John we enter the thirteenth century. The condition of the March and of Hereford as the base of it becomes clearer, though actually merely developing on the lines long since laid down. We see the great Marcher Lords, eager for conquest in the still foreign land of Wales, moved by two passions—a dread of the interference of the Crown and a desire for the help of the Crown against the Welsh. The one of these two desires was uppermost, according to their success or failure against the Welsh.

The absence of Richard I had left the earldom of Hereford vacant. John filled it by granting it to Henry de Bohun, whose grandfather, Humphrey, had come into possession of the territories of Miles, whose male issue was extinct, by marrying his eldest daughter. Bohun had been loyal to Henry II, but for all that he entered on his earldom with much of its lustre gone. He was not given the Castle of Hereford, which King John kept in his own hands, coming to the city in 1200, and again in 1207.

The Earl of Hereford sided with the Barons in the struggle which ended only with the king's death. He was excommunicated by Innocent III, but lived in the enjoyment of his earldom to

witness the great revival of Welsh nationalism under Llywelyn the Great. A united Wales stared him in the face, and he feared it, as did all the Marcher barons. His son was to feel the full force of what he had seen from afar. Henry III, indeed, made Hereford his headquarters in his Welsh campaign, and it must have been something of a shock to him when Richard Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, who for more than a century had held Goodrich Castle, allied himself with Llywelyn. In this treason Marshall was supported by Walter de Clifford, of Clifford Castle. A new campaign followed, Henry again coming to Hereford in 1233. Disaster followed disaster. It is true Clifford was driven into exile, but in January Marshall defeated the royal army, and with Llywelyn burnt Shrewsbury. This seems to have satisfied the Welsh, and Marshall died in Ireland in 1235.

Henry was a mild man. He pardoned Clifford, who was evidently a hot-tempered and daring scoundrel, for in 1250 we read of his "compelling the king's messenger to eat the royal letters, including the wax of the seal." Llywelyn was by then dead, and peace of a sort certain.

But now that he no longer feared the Welsh, the Earl of Hereford also began to conspire against the king, and with a Mortimer. It was

in 1252 that he sided first with Simon de Montfort, and that over an affair in Gascony. But in 1258 he sided with the Barons in Parliament at Oxford. By then the border was less secure. Llywelyn, the last Prince of Wales, was moving along the border, and already in arms against Prince Edward, towards Chester. By 1260 Llywelyn was already master of Builth Castle, which he had taken from Mortimer, and this brought the Earl of Hereford to the king's side. In that very year Llywelyn was burning at Eardisley and Wigmore, and in the following year Prince Edward appeared in Hereford and drove Llywelyn back. In that year, too, Montfort, with whom the Earl of Hereford had at one time acted till their interests divided them, took Hereford and carried off the bishop, whom he shut up in Eardisley Castle. Again Prince Edward appeared and took Hay, Huntington, and Brecon, and gave them into the keeping of Mortimer.

All through this struggle the Earl of Hereford sided with the king, but his son was with Leicester against him. Perhaps it was well to have a representative on both sides. However that may be, they fought against one another at Lewes, and the earl was taken and his son wounded. Again Montfort took Hereford, and

this time Hay also and the Marcher Lords groaned under him. In April, 1265, he brought Prince Edward his prisoner to Hereford. On 28 May Edward escaped and took refuge with Mortimer at Wigmore, where he was joined by the men of the Earl of Hereford and many others. With these he began his campaign. Montfort made Hereford his headquarters, and only left it to fall at Evesham, where Humphrey de Bohun, son of the Earl of Hereford, was taken.

It is obvious what the condition of Herefordshire must have been when Evesham was fought. The whole county was burnt and in confusion. A kind of private war obtained there: yet the two great families Bohun and Mortimer were by far the strongest force therein, and in 1259 Mortimer held the Castle of Hereford, and in the following year Bohun was made one of the Council.

In 1267 followed peace with Llywelyn; not for long, for he soon appeared recalcitrant over his homage to the English throne, and in 1274, when Edward I was crowned and Humphrey de Bohun succeeded his father as Earl of Hereford, war was certain. Eight years later that war, in which both the Earl of Hereford and Mortimer bore a great part, ended with the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffyd, last Prince of Wales.

The peace which, no doubt, brought good to the shire—in 1298 she returned burgesses to Parliament—was not so happy in its effect on the earl, who, quarrelling with Gloucester over the spoil, found the Crown by no means reluctant to interfere. So little reluctant was it that in 1291 the earl found himself in prison, and in 1298 he died.

He was succeeded by his son Humphrey, the fourth earl, who in 1302 married Elizabeth, the king's daughter, and ten years later, after quarrelling with Edward II, was slain by Andrew Harclay at Boroughbridge.

The treason of Mortimer did not much affect Hereford. Edward III proved generous and restored his lands to Edmund, his son, just before his death; but his son Roger took a great part in the famous tournament at Hereford in 1344.

As for the Bohuns, the fifth and sixth earls had attained renown in the French and Scottish wars, and with the death of the seventh earl the family became extinct in the male line. The daughters of the last earl, however, married: Eleanor Edward III's sixth son, Thomas of Woodstock; and Mary, at the age of ten, we are told, Henry, Earl of Derby, afterwards Henry IV of England.

The England that Edward I had left so great had gradually suffered a transformation under his successors. This transformation—the whole period was a transition—reached its climax in the reign of Richard II, and enabled Henry Bolingbroke to seize the throne. In Herefordshire this period of change is well marked. The Welsh were restless: in 1400 the city of Hereford was in the hands of marauders, and the first decade of the fifteenth century is marked by the revolt of Owen Glendower. It seemed as though the work of the great Edward would have to be done again. Soon all Hereford and England was up, the castle refortified, and Henry IV himself preparing for a Welsh campaign. Owen Glendower was stronger for the Percys' assistance, but with their destruction at Shrewsbury he did not appear really weaker. Wales seemed inclined to attempt rebellion, and in the very year of Shrewsbury we find Herefordshire invaded and cattle driven off, houses burnt, and prisoners taken. The line of castles that had promised the county security was broken and all in disrepair. In September of the year of Shrewsbury, 1403, Henry IV came to Hereford to make preparation for refortifying and provisioning the castles of Clifford, Hay, Eardisley, and others. But the sufferings of the county had

been already great, and in 1403 it was with Shropshire exempted from taxation. But in the following year things grew even worse: the Welsh came burning, slaying, robbing, and wasting in great force, and the Prince of Wales came to the assistance of the county. His headquarters were at Hereford and sometimes at Leominster, and things grew gradually better. In May, 1405, the king himself came to Hereford. He was soon forced to go North to cope with the rising of Northumberland, but in September he was back again in Hereford. He achieved very little. The Prince of Wales was more successful, and by 1408 he broke the back of the rebellion, Owen Glendower dying, it is said, in obscurity at Monnington-on-Wye in 1415.

We must not forgot that it was at this time that Lollardy showed itself, and that Sir John Oldcastle was a Herefordshire man.

The great Herefordshire names were in the roll at Agincourt, among them Vaughan of Bredwardine and Baskerville of Eardisley But during all the reign of Henry V and his successor the county suffered from Welsh inroads—so much so that in 1442 "it was enacted that for the next six years any Welshman wrongfully carrying off Englishmen into

Wales should be guilty of high treason." The Act was renewed in 1449.

In 1452 Henry VI was brought to Hereford. The Lancastrian influence, according to Mr. Carlyle, predominated in the county, though the Yorkists were strong.

In 1471 was established that Council first nominated by Edward IV's son which in a later development influenced Herefordshire so much as the Council in the Marches of Wales. Then came the great Earl of Gloucester, Richard III. His two chief supporters were Buckingham and Howard. The reward of the former comprised, among other things, the constableship of all royal castles within the Principality of Wales and in the counties of Shropshire, Hereford, and elsewhere. It included the castles of Ewyas Lacy, Clifford, and Wigmore. But he was soon proclaimed traitor and executed.

Bosworth Field disposed of Richard, and with Henry VII, whose accession was peaceably accepted in Hereford, a new chapter opens in the history of the Welsh border. The Council of the Marches meant the return of the Crown in earnest and in peace; and though the quarrel with Rome was the cause of a new disorder, for Herefordshire was strongly Catholic, the peace was a forerunner of that great Act of 1536

which assimilated Wales to England and put the crown on the great achievement of William the Conqueror.

We shall not follow the story of the county further. It must suffice to say that Herefordshire, at least at the opening of the Great Rebellion, was devotedly loyal to the Crown, and that even those few who had sided with the rebels had had more than enough of them by 1660. Nonconformity then had little hold in the county, and at the Revolution of 1688 Herefordshire sentiment was true to its traditions. Till the Reform Bill, indeed, Herefordshire was Tory, from 1698 to 1774 returning only Tory members, and is still, I am delighted to see, strongly on the side of the angels.

VIII

TO HEREFORD

SO much for the County: what of the City, the only City in our valley, and what of the way to it from Wales and the Hay?

It is possible in a wet season or early in the year to go by river from Hay to Hereford with some comfort and amusement in a light boat. I did not attempt it, however, being willing to reserve my experiences of the river itself for those reaches which lie between Hereford and Chepstow. My road from Hay to Hereford lies at first on the right bank of the river, and brings us in three fair miles to Clifford.

There is no castle on our river that can have stood better or more imposingly than Clifford Castle. A fragment of ruin to-day, it yet impresses itself on the traveller as neither Hay nor Aberedw has done, and offers as fair and gay a view of the winding stream in its lush meadows as any we are likely to meet with between Plynlimon and the sea.

Clifford is one of the five Herefordshire castles mentioned in Domesday Book. It was at the time of that great survey (1086) in the hands of Ralph de Todeni; but it had been built, or at least repaired, by William Fitzosbern, Earl of Hereford, to whom it was given by William of Normandy at the Conquest. Ralph de Todeni acquired it on the attainder of William Fitzosbern's son Roger. It passed with Ralph's daughter as part of her dower to Richard Fitz-Purtz. The second son of this marriage, Walter, assumed the family name of Clifford from this property. His daughter was the Faire Rosamond—

"Rosa mundi non Rosa munda. . . ."

And, indeed, the fairest vision the place holds for us is that of the little Rosamond, five years old, her little hands on the castle battlements, standing tip-toe, the sun on her sunny hair, to peer at some tremendous herald thundering and trumpeting at her father's gates.

We know too little of Faire Rosamond to be able to assert that she was born here, for Frampton-on-Severn, Hamwash Clifford near Leominster, and Hay Castle all claim that honour, but it seems most likely that this was the place. That she was the mistress of

Henry II and one of the fairest women in England is certain enough; but they tell me now that the story of the labyrinth at Woodstock and the poison of Eleanor is a myth, though all my boyhood they told it for true! Faire Rosamond lies, as all the world knows, not here at Clifford but at Godstow, whither Becket led her, and on her grave was carved that legend from which I have already quoted:—

"Hic jacet in tumulo Rosa mundi non Rosa munda:
Non redolet sedolet quae redolere solet."

There she lay in peace till the Reformation drove other fair things beside the Fairies out of Old England. Then Leland tells us that "Rosamunde's tomb at Godstowe nunnery was taken up a-late. It is a stone with this inscription, *Tumba Rosamundae.*" According to Allen, who was residing in Worcester College in the early years of the seventeenth century, and who died 1632, the stone was broken in pieces.

Walter de Clifford, brother of Rosamond, succeeded his father in 1221. He took John's side all through in the quarrel with the Barons, but joined the Earl of Pembroke against Henry III. The king deprived him, but granted him Clifford again in 1234. It was this Walter who compelled the king's messenger to eat, seal and all,

the royal letter which he had brought. This escapade cost him a thousand marks. In 1250 he was commanded by the king to marry his daughter, aged twelve, to her cousin, William Longespee, great-grandson of Fair Rosamond. Six years later, however, Longespee was killed in a tournament, and the young widow, Clifford's only child, became heir to her father's vast estates. Then came John Giffard of Bromsfield, the enemy of Simon de Montfort and the friend of Prince Edward, and carried her off by force, and presently with the king's leave married her.

Giffard was a considerable person. In 1282, with Edmund Mortimer, he defeated Llywelyn near Builth, as we have seen. It is curious to find that Giffard's wife, Matilda de Clifford, interceded on Llywelyn's behalf, imploring Archbishop Peckham to absolve the Welsh prince and to permit his burial in consecrated ground, all of which the archbishop refused to do.

Giffard died in 1299 and left no male issue. Clifford came to the Crown and was granted to the Mortimers, who entertained Richard II and John of Gaunt there for a night in 1381. When the Mortimer family, merged in the House of York, sat on the throne of England, Edward IV made the Duke of Buckingham constable of the

castle. Even then the place seems to have been ruinous, the remains we now see probably dating from Henry IV's time.

From Clifford we proceed right across the valley and the stream to Whitney, where there are two bridges—one old, the other modern. It is said that two previous bridges have been swept away by the ice coming down with the flood!

Whitney is the modern form of Witenei or Witenau, which in Saxon meant "a clear water stream with boggy islands." In Domesday Book it is entered as Terra Regis: "The king holds Witenei in Elseduna hundred. Alunard was its owner in the time of King Edward, a freeman, able to travel where he pleased."

The Whitney family, who held the place in the Middle Age, traced their descent from Thurstin the Fleming, a companion of Duke William, who got the Wigmore district after the Conquest and married Agnes, only child of Alured de Merleburgh, who settled Pencomb on her. Thurstin also got Whitney, and their son took the surname de Whitney. A Sir Eustace held Whitney from the Crown in the last year of the thirteenth century. His successor, knighted in 1306, was Member of Parliament for the county. They were a great

Crusading family and travelled far. Then in 1368 Sir Robert de Whitney was chosen to accompany the Duke of Clarence with two hundred knights and gentlemen on his journey to Milan to marry Violante Visconti, daughter of the Duke of Milan. There he may have met and certainly could have seen Petrarch. In 1377 he was sheriff of the county, and represented it several times in Parliament. He was King Richard's friend, but presently deserted him for Henry Bolingbroke. He fell against Owen Glendower in 1401, when his castle of Whitney was taken and burnt. His son, Sir Robert, was compensated by the king, and was at Agincourt with Henry V. Another Sir Robert, two hundred years later, was true to the White King and sacrificed almost everything in his behalf. His son died without issue, and the family name became extinct.

The site of their castle, which, like the old Church of SS. Peter and Paul, was swept away in the great flood of 1735, when the Wye took here a new course, is to be found a little below the old Court. From Whitney, always in view of Merbach Hill, we follow the road north of the river down the widening valley to Winforton. This place, too, is mentioned in Domesday Book, but as Widfordestone, "the village on the wide

fording place." In 1088 Ralph de Todeni Lord Clifford held this manor which Harold had possessed.

Another village that appears in Domesday Book is not more than a mile away along this road—Willersley. It was then called Willadeslege, and had also belonged to Harold. The church is rather fine, and has a good Norman doorway on the south. The reredos is Jacobean.

About a mile due north from Willersley stands one of the most picturesque and lovely of all the villages in the valley of the Wye—Eardisley, with its timbered houses and deep roofs. Harold had held this manor also before the Conquest. In Domesday Book it is entered as Herdeslege, and was then in possession of Roger de Lacy and situated in the midst of a wood. Its castle is called a fortified house, and was probably not built of stone. It was occupied by Robert de Baskerville. By Henry III's time the fortified house had become a stone castle. Then Bernard Newmarch got it, and it presently passed from him to the Earl of Hereford. In 1263 the Baskervilles had acquired it by marriage. They joined Simon de Montfort, and so lost Eardisley to Sir Roger de Clifford, but in 1280, on his death, the Baskervilles got the place again and held it for three hundred years.

The castle, long since passed away, is now represented by a fine old farmhouse. Spear heads and armour, now preserved at Beau Manor, have been dug up on the land there, and even a part of the old drawbridge.

The church should be visited in spite of its restoration. There is a holy-water stoup in the porch and at the end of the north aisle a fine chantry chapel, while the font is one of the finest pieces of Norman work in existence (1160). In the south aisle is an Anglo-Norman tomb, which I was told was that of a German Fitz John Fiest. The iron gates of the porch are fine work of the Renaissance.

From Eardisley it is something under two miles to Kinnersley, where there is an old church in the Early English style with a "saddle-back" roof. It consists of chancel, nave of four bays, aisles, south porch, and semi-detached western tower. A fine seventeenth-century monument to Francis Smalman, Lord of the Manor, and to Susan his wife (1631), is in the church and a fine brass of the time of Henry V (1421).

Of the castle, the Rev. Charles Robinson [1] tells us: "The name of Kinnersley contains in it

[1] "A History of the Castles of Herefordshire and their Lords" (Longman, 1869), p. 88.

the earliest history of the place. Some Saxon colonist called Kynard or Kynworth made his clearing (*ley*) in the dense forest which covered the greater portion of western Herefordshire, and in the fosse and stockade, raised to protect him from the attack of man and beast, laid the foundation of the future castle. At what period the stone structure was first erected it is impossible to say, as every trace of it has been effaced by the comparatively modern building which now occupies its site; but supposing it to have been coeval with the tower of the church, we should assign it to the reign of Henry I. It formed at an early period the home of a family which took its name from its place of residence, and the old pedigree of the Kinnersleys or Kynardesleys is adorned with the representation of a moated castle (of a very conventional type), in front of which stands an old man, halberd in hand, and supported by twelve armed men, awaiting the passage across the drawbridge of three mounted soldiers. The preamble of the pedigree informs us that this represents John of Kynardsley and his son receiving the sheriff and his officers when they came by the Conqueror's order to survey the land for Domesday Book! . . .

"In 1340 the Delabere family held Kinnersley.

"The chief historical interest which attaches both to the house of Bere and the Castle of Kinnersley is derived from an incident in the life of the unfortunate Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, of which we are able to give the details, which a contemporary MS. (never published, we believe) has preserved.

"It will be remembered that among the powerful nobles who helped Richard III to seize the Crown, one of the most active was the Duke of Buckingham, a man in whose veins no little of the Royal blood of England ran. Whether there rose in his mind a natural reaction when he saw the evil results which attended his too successful exertions, and remorse led him to seek their reversal, cannot be determined with certainty, but it is evident that the Duke, in spite of the honours heaped upon him, early conceived a hatred against the hand that bestowed them. Archbishop Morton, a zealous Lancastrian, directed his attention to the young Earl of Richmond, as the only person who could free the nation from Richard's tyranny, and accordingly the Duke raised in his favour the standard of revolt in the Welsh Marches, where his own influence was predominant. His designs, however, were rendered abortive partly by the floods which made Severn im-

passable, and partly by the hesitation displayed by the Courtneneys and other fellow conspirators. The Duke therefore 'came from Brecknock to Nebblie, and with him brought my Ladie his wife, my Lorde Stafforde, and my Lorde Henrie, and there tarried one weeke and sent for the gentlemen of the countrie unto him; and when he had spoken with them, departed thens, and at his departing delivered his son and heyer to Sir Richard Delabere, knight, for to kepe until he sent for him by a token.' Most faithfully did both Sir Richard and his wife Elizabeth keep this trust, concealing the youthful family of the Duke at Kinnersley, and thus averting from them the same bloody fate which involved their father."

From Kinnersley we proceed due south across the railway through the village of Letton, where the Church of S. John Baptist has traces of Norman work, and thence across the Wye to Bredwardine—a name made familiar in our mouths as household words by Chaucer and Sir Walter Scott.

Of the family which held Bredwardine Castle we know in reality very little. The manor seems to have been granted at the Norman Conquest to John de Bredwardine, but we know nothing of him. The castle in the thirteenth century

had become the property of the Baskervilles, by marriage probably, but the manor then belonged to the Earl of Hereford. Sir Walter de Baskerville, however, married Elizabeth Lacy, into whose family the manor had come in the fourteenth century, and he died seised of both castle and manor. His son died without issue, and the place then came into the hands of the Fouleshursts of Cheshire. This family were without male issue in 1439, and Sir John Baskerville, great-grandson of Richard, the brother of Sir Walter, got Bredwardine. Later we find it in the possession of the Vaughans, but how that happened we do not know.

Mr. Robinson, however, in his book on the Herefordshire castles calls our attention to two very interesting monuments in the chancel of the parish church of S. Andrew, a building in the early Norman style for the most part, the nave very early.

"The earlier and larger effigy, somewhat rudely carved out of the soft local sandstone, has been a good deal mutilated, so that the figure, originally of gigantic proportions, has now been curtailed by a procrustean process to much the same length as the later life-sized effigy. We are thus deprived of the additional evidence which the greaves and spurs would have given

as to its date, but enough remains to enable us to say with confidence that it is not earlier than the middle of the fourteenth century. It represents a warrior clad in a tight-fitting jupon, beneath which is a hauberk of chain mail extending almost to the knees. A belt, ornamented with roses, encircles the hips, and from it depends on the right side a dagger and on the left a sword. The elbow pieces appear to be of disc shape, but the form of the gauntlets cannot be traced. The helmet is conical and without vizor, and the gorget of chain mail is attached to the bassinet by the earlier and simpler arrangement of staples and lace. The head of the figure rests upon a cushion, at each side of which a winged angel kneels, but neither crest nor plume is visible. We can only conjecture that the warrior represented either Walter de Baskerville, who died 42 Edward III, or Walter de Bredwardine, the grandfather of Sir Roger Vaughan. We incline to the latter surmise, because it does not appear that the Baskervilles made this place their residence, but chiefly lived at Eardisley. . . .

"The later effigy in alabaster is a very beautiful example of monumental art. The knight is represented clad from head to foot in plate armour; the arms are crossed upon the

breast, the hands elevated, and the head is defended by an open conical bassinet. A tilting helmet forms the pillow, and suspended from the neck is the collar of SS. The latter distinctive marks enable us to identify the knight without much hesitation. The armour shows that its wearer lived at the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century, and the collar makes the latter date almost a matter of certainty. It was purely a Lancastrian badge, conferred only on active partisans, and not in use before quite the end of the fourteenth century. We have therefore to find among those connected with Bredwardine at that particular time some warrior of sufficient distinction to have gained this peculiar honour and also to have gained it by military services to the House of Lancaster. No one could better meet both these requirements than Sir Roger Vaughan of Bredwardine. His marriage with the daughter of Sir David Gam, Shakespeare's Fluellen, is itself proof enough that he wore the Red Rose next his heart; while his death at Agincourt not only confirms the proof, but afforded in its circumstances an occasion for some signal mark of Royal favour. Now the popular story is that on the field of Agincourt King Henry, in his effort to save the life of his brother, the Duke of

Gloucester, was hard beset by eighteen French knights, who had sworn to beat the crown from his head or die in the attempt. Already a gem had been struck from the diadem, when, says tradition, David Gam, Richard Vaughan, and another rushed forward and saved the life of the king at the expense of their own. Before expiring, they received from the king's hand the honour of knighthood, and had certainly earned by their heroic self-sacrifice the right to wear the Lancastrian ensign."

From Bredwardine we return across the six-arched bridge over the Wye and make our way to Staunton. Here the old Church of S. Mary, in the Transition style, was rebuilt in 1720. In 1775 the chantry chapel was destroyed, and, indeed, all that we have left us to-day is a magnificent view from the churchyard over valley, hill, and meadow, through which the Wye flows on to Hereford.

So we proceed to Monnington, either through Brobury, where there is nothing to see, but whence there is a beautiful avenue all the way, or along the high-road so far as the inn, where we turn to the left.

At Monnington Court, now a farm, a fine old house, died Owen Glendower on 20 September, 1415. Holinshed says he died of sheer starva-

tion among the hills, but Henry V had pardoned him, and though he refused to accept that pardon, he evidently was forgotten before his death. His son-in-law lived at Monnington, and he seems to have died, as we have said, in his house. He was buried in the churchyard, according to tradition, and his grave is still known. What talks he must have with Harry Hotspur in the Elysian fields!

On the further side of the river from Monnington is the site of Moccas Castle, founded by Hugh de Fresne in 1291 without the king's permission. By Queen Mary's time the place had come to the Vaughans of Bredwardine.

Henry Vaughan of Moccas, Mr. Robinson tells us, married in 1635 Frances, daughter of Sir Walter Pye. "She was left a widow, and continuing to reside at Moccas with her son Roger, found a second husband in a young man who was caught hunting deer in the park. The story goes that she was so much struck with the prisoner's appearance that she not only forgave the offence but permitted him to condone it by marriage with herself—a result which is less surprising when we find that the poacher was a cadet of the ancient family of Cornewall of Berington, and may not improbably have intended his shaft for nobler game than ranged the park. Her son by this

marriage not only succeeded to Moccas, but acquired the rest of the Vaughan property."

The Church of Moccas, dedicated to S. Michael, is old, of the Norman style. There is an altar tomb to some members of the De Fresne family.

Not far from Moccas, on this side the Wye, is Preston-on-Wye, with an interesting church, restored in 1883, of the Norman and Early English styles. By this way, beyond Preston, we cross the Wye by ferry, proceed half a mile down stream on the north side of it, and cross again by a bridge, built in 1897, into Bridge Sollers, where there is little to see. Before crossing the stream, however, we pass Offa's Dyke, and as this is a very ancient landmark something must be said of it.

At no part of its long course from the Dee side, in Flint, to Sedbury Cliff, on Severn, if indeed that be its line of march, is this vast earthwork more obscure than in its passage of Herefordshire. That is a result most probably of the constant and fierce resistance to the Mercian advance, which caused the rampart or earthwork to be continually broken. Moreover, here it is thought that resistance caused the Mercians to push forward their frontier across Wye, so that the Dyke ceased in this district to

have much meaning. Probably, too, the construction of the Dyke in Hereford was less substantial and strong than elsewhere, for the absence of local stone is marked. Here between Bridge Sollers and Hereford the Wye probably was the "accepted mark."

But the Dyke is not the only antiquity hereabout. We are close to Kenchester, one of the few Herefordshire places that have certainly been the site of a Roman town.

"The Roman road which ran from Viroconium (Wroxeter) to Isca (Caerleon)," says Professor Haverfield,[1] "crosses the county from north to south. It can still be traced with considerable precision, under the name of Watling Street, north of the Wye, and of Stoney Street, south of that river. It passes two 'stations,' Leintwardine and Kenchester. . . . Kenchester appears to have been a small town, in shape an irregular hexagon, with an area of some seventeen acres, surrounded by a stone wall with four gates. The principal street ran from east to west, and was fifteen feet wide; the houses contained tesselated pavements, hypocausts, leaden and tile drains; coins of various periods, fibulæ (one of old

[1] "An Archæological Survey of Herefordshire," by J. O. Bevan, James Davies, and F. Haverfield, members of the Woolhope Nat. Field Club (Westminster, 1896).

silver), glass, pottery, and the like abound, while two inscriptions (one dated A.D. 283) lend a distinctive Roman colouring. Suburbs lay outside; a mile to the west was a 'villa' at Bishopstone, celebrated by Wordsworth in an indifferent sonnet. The town, though small, had pretensions to comfort and civilization, and is the only important Romano-British site in the county; it lies under the shadow of Credenhill, and may have succeeded a British *oppidum*. In itself it represents more probably the Romanized Briton than the Roman. The mileage of the Itinerary permits us to identify Magni (or Magna), a name which the wholly unmilitary character of the place forbids us to expand into Magna Castra. Camden, Stukeley, and others supposed it to be Ariconum, but the identification with Magn(a), first proposed by Horsley, seems tolerably certain."

Leland says :—

"Kenchester standeth at iii myles or more above Hereford. . . . This towne is far more auncyent then Hereford and was celebrated yn the Romaynes tyme as appereth by many thinges, and especyally by antique mony of the Caesars, very often fownd withyn the toune and yn ploughyng abowt; the which the people ther cawlleth Dwarfas Mony. The cumpace of Ken-

chestre hath bene by estimation as much as Hereford excepting the castel. . . . Traces of the walles and turrets yet appere, prope fundamenta, and more should have appered if the people of Hereford towne and other thereabout had not yn tymes paste pulled doune muche and pyked owt of the best for their buildinges. Of late one Mr. Brainton . . . dyd fetch much fayked stone there toward his buildinges. . . . The place wher the toun was ys al overgrowen with brambles, hasylles, and lyke shrubbes. Neverthelesse here and there yet appere ruins of buildinges, of the which the folisch people cawlle one the King of Feyres Chayre. . . . To be short, of the decaye of Kenchestre Hereford rose and florishyd."

Not far from Kenchester, on the Watling Street, is Credenhill, with a great camp, not Roman but British, on the top of it, whence there is a great view over several counties. On the way back from Credenhill to the main road into Hereford we pass Stretton Sugwas, with an old Norman church, entirely rebuilt in 1877. Two miles thence bring us into the outskirts of Hereford at White Cross, erected, it is said, by Thomas de Cantelupe, Bishop of Hereford, 1275–1283, to commemorate a return from his palace at Sugwas to Hereford, when the bells of his

cathedral began ringing without any apparent human agency. Duncomb says, however, with more reason, that "In the year 1347 an infectious disorder ravaged the whole county of Hereford, and, as usual, displayed the greatest malignity in the places most numerously inhabited. This created the necessity for removing the markets from Hereford, and the spot of waste ground on which the cross now stands was applied to that purpose; in memory of that event Dr. Lewis Charlton, who was consecrated Bishop of Hereford a few years later, caused this cross to be erected."

IX

THE STORY OF HEREFORD

SOME habitation, town or camp, there was at Hereford or ever the Romans came, and with their advent it is not necessary that that centre of life was either deserted or destroyed, but the Romans did not build a town there. Their town was at Kenchester, and it is perhaps probable that the site of Hereford was deserted while they remained. With their departure the site of Hereford was used again, and the Dark Age here, as everywhere, saw the return of the Barbarians to the old ways and places they had used before the coming of civilization. Remains of camps, both pre-Roman and post-Roman, have been found on the site of Hereford, but nothing at all of Roman origin within many miles of it, as at Kenchester in the west or Stretton Grandison in the east. A Roman road passing, however, two or three miles to the north of Hereford connected these two places, probably turning south at the latter towards Gloucester, while at

Kenchester this road joined the Watling Street of which we have already spoken.

Whether it were the Britons or the Saxons who built a town at Hereford we do not know for certain, but an early tradition has it that at first the city went under the name of Trefawydd, meaning the town in the fir wood, and later under that of Caerfawydd, meaning the town in the beech wood, while the Saxons called it Fernley. It was with the rise of Mercia apparently that it got at once its importance and its name of Hereford, which is said to mean the Ford of the Army.

Leland, delightful as ever, writes of it: "The name of Hereford toune of some in Welsh is called Heurford, of an old ford by the castle, by which many passed over or ever the great bridge on Wye at Hereford was made." "Some say that it was called Fernleye, or otherwise Fernhill, Saltus Silicis, as Mr. Taylor said, and the place where the Cathedral Church is now was sometime a chapel of Our Lady, called Our Lady Chapel of Fernelege."

In fact, however, it seems most likely that the place was Saxon from its origin; and though the date of its foundation is hidden from us, we know[1] that a Synod was held here as early as

[1] Duncumb, "Coll. to Hist. and Antiq. of the Co. of Hereford" (Hereford, 1804), vol. i, p. 222.

A.D. 680; it was probably at that time a place of some importance and as such "could hardly have been built later than the close of the century preceding." Camden agrees with this: "It seems first to have risen up in the maturity of the Saxon heptarchy."

However that may be, with the rise of Mercia to power Hereford became of great importance as King Offa's capital, with his palace close by. That great king, whom the Pope addressed as Rex Anglorum, and whose daughter Charlemagne sought for his son in marriage, caused the Pope to establish a third archbishopric in England, namely, at Lichfield in Mercia. This arrangement lasted only sixteen years, for in 803 Offa's successor, Cenwulf, voluntarily restored all the metropolitan rights to the see of Canterbury.

In Offa's day there were three great divisions in England, namely, Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria, and these roughly corresponded to the three archdioceses Canterbury, Lichfield, and York. East Anglia was both ecclesiastically and politically subject to Mercia, and the murder of Ethelbert, King of the East Angles, whilst at the court of Offa at Hereford as a suitor for his daughter, doubtless established this in the eyes of all men.

Curiously enough, this event seems to have done much for the enriching and enlarging of Hereford. For multitudes came to visit the martyr's tomb. Leland, indeed, dates the greatness of the town from this event: "Hereford hath been of estimation ever since the time of Offa and the burial of Ethelbert who lyeth there."

However that may be, the true greatness of Hereford then, and later, lay in its position on the frontier of Wales. It was one of the three great English gates into Wales, the others being Shrewsbury and Chester.

This becomes evident when after the Danish incursions, and the establishment of a general monarchy of a sort by Egbert, in the reign of Athelstan, the Welsh, as so often happened later, began to make incursions into Herefordshire. The king assembled a strong army and attacked them, compelling them at last to agree to pay an annual tribute by a treaty made at Hereford in 939. This tribute consisted in the payment of twenty pounds in gold, three hundred in silver, two hundred head of cattle, certain hawks and hounds to the value of sixty-six pounds of silver, and was afterwards commuted by Edgar for the heads of three hundred wolves.

Hereford was probably enclosed by a wall in

Athelstan's time, where it was not naturally defended by the Wye; and it is probable that that which imperfectly remains, "although improved and strengthened at various periods," stands on the original foundations and contains the same area of land.[1] The gates were six in number, namely, Wye-bridge Gate, at the southern end of the bridge; Friar's Gate, on the south-west of the city; Eigne Gate, on the west; Widemarsh Gate, on the north; Bishop's Gate, on the north-east; and S. Andrew's Gate, or S. Owen's Gate, on the south-east. Fifteen embattled towers, each thirty-four feet high, held the sixteen-foot wall. And the whole circumference of the city held then by walls and river was 2,350 yards, which is as near as can be to Leland's "good mile." Leland further adds: "These walles and gates be right well maintained by the bourgesses of the town," and adds that the town was further secured by "a little brooke that cometh a five miles by west, and circueth the ditches of the walles, *ubi non defenditur vaga*, and goeth down leaving the castle on the right hand, and there drieving two milles for corne, goeth into Wye a flyte shoote beneath Wye Bridge and hard beneath the castle."

Thus fortified Hereford must have been nearly

[1] Duncumb, "History of Hereford," *u.c.*, vol. i, p. 224.

impregnable. Would that it had so remained for our delight to the present; but the gates were destroyed by order of the Corporation as follows: Wye-bridge Gate and Friar's Gate in 1782, S. Owen's in 1786, Eigne in 1787, Bishop's Gate and Widemarsh in 1798. Duncumb tells us that the gates of Wyebridge, Friar's, Eigne, and S. Owen's, having been injured in the siege, were falling to decay, but others exhibited no signs of it whatever, and would probably have endured many centuries longer. "Their appearance was venerable and in connexion with the wall they constituted an agreeable termination to the several streets; but it may be objected, on the other hand, that low and narrow gateways considerably obstruct the passing of carriages, and also in some degree prevent the free circulation of air." To which we may reply that we have good authority for knowing that the Devil is apt to quote Scripture when it suits him. The Vandals of modern Europe are only more contemptible, not less damnable, than their brethren of the Dark Ages.

We have, as it happens, a picture of the sort of thing Hereford suffered in the general decay of English power which heralded the Conquest. In 1055 the Welsh were making inroads into Herefordshire, as they had been doing for the last three

years under the leadership of the renegade Earl of Chester and their Prince Gruffyd. Earl Ralph, who was in command at Hereford, went out to meet them, but was defeated, and falling back on the city both he and his forces tried to enter. But the pursuit was hard upon them, and when the gate was opened to admit the English troops, the Welsh entered along with them and the city became a shambles; the cathedral was burnt, the Bishop and seven canons slain, and according to the Welsh "the Britons returned home with manie worthie prisoners, great triumph and rich spoiles, leaving nothing in the town but blood and ashes, and the walles rased to the ground."

It was this event, in which Ralph lost five hundred men of his army, that induced King Edward to send Harold into Wales. He pursued but could not come up with the Welsh; and, returning to Hereford, "caused a great trench to be cast about the town, with a high rampire, strongly fortifying the Gates of the same." In fact, he refortified Hereford.

Duncumb thinks it "highly probable" that Harold founded the castle at this time for the defence of the town. Others attribute it to William Fitzosbern, Earl of Hereford, or to William the king. However that may be, the

castle was set in the south-east of the city, with the Wye on its south, and nearly joined the cathedral, which it well protected. It consisted in Leland's day of two wards, with the keep in the smaller towards the west, with a strong tower on the top and beneath a dungeon. In the eastern ward were the gate-house, a chapel of S. Cuthbert, a mill, and two dwelling-houses, and "a fayre and plentiful spring of water." The entrance was to the north, over "a great bridge of stone arches, with a drawbridge in the middle." Leland adds it was "high and very strong, having in the outer wall two semi-circular towers and one great tower within." It is to-day difficult to realize that less than two centuries and a half ago there was still to be seen here the great remains of a castle nearly as large as Windsor, and "one of the fayrest, largest and strongest in all England," for in 1746 the site was converted into the delightful public garden we now see.

With the Conquest and its consequences on the border we have roughly dealt elsewhere. Hereford bore her part, as we have seen, as the southern gate through which the conquest of Wales passed. But something ought, I suppose, to be said here of the burgess rights introduced by a group of Lords Marchers to Hereford and

other places on the border, and that gradually spread to some few places in Wales. These were the laws and customs of Breteuil, or, as Domesday Book has it, "*Leges et consuetudines quae sunt in Hereford et in Breteuil.*" We know very little about them, but Miss Bateson[1] has collected a quantity of valuable evidence which will doubtless be enlarged.

It would seem that the lords who introduced these "laws and customs" were not only connected with one another, but probably acted under the orders, or at any rate under the sanction, of King William. They formed near a castle a borough or *Frankville*, where *Francigenae burgenses* lived and enjoyed privileges as tenants of the lord. These tenants were, of course, Normans, a band that might be depended upon. It was almost certainly William Fitzosbern, cousin of the king and Earl of Hereford, who first introduced these laws and customs, and thus planted a Norman colony with its rights at various important places on the frontier.

After the Conquest no doubt the castle was rebuilt, or at least strengthened, if Harold founded it, by the Fitzosberns, who thus became Earls of Hereford, or hereditary governors of the castle. This endured till the time of King

[1] *English Historical Review*, 1900, esp. pp. 76, 302 *et seq.*

Henry, who granted Hereford her first charter in 1117, when the Constable of England, Milo, held the castle for the king; but on his espousing the cause of the Empress the earldom and castle were transferred to Robert de Beaumont, Earl of Leicester, whose wife, Amicia, was the granddaughter of William Fitzosbern. The Empress in her short triumph reappointed Milo; but Stephen returned, advanced in person with an army against Hereford, and took it. He is said to have entered the town with great pomp and splendour, and to have sat crowned in the cathedral church during Mass on Whit-Sunday. Milo was deprived, but Henry II granted to Milo's son, Roger, "the mote of Hereford, with the whole castel and the third of a penny of the revenues of the whole county of Hereford." It will perhaps be interesting here to see what sort of customs obtained in Hereford at this time. As it happens, in the first year of Henry II the customs, privileges, and boundaries of Hereford were ascertained and entered in a book of record. And it is from a translation of this book, quoted by Duncumb, that we take the following :—

"First, Wee use at the ffeast of St. Michaell to chuse a Bayliffe out of our fellow cittizens by the election and consent of our whole commonaltye, who shall have sufficient of tenements and rents

to answere for himself to the king and us. To him next under the kinge wee must be obedient in all thinges touching the kinge and the state of the cittie. And whosoever of our fellow cittizens, of what condition soever, shall injure or offend the said baylie, and shall thereof be convicted by xii of his fellow citizens, such offender may be proceeded against as a disobedient and perjured man ; soe may his mayntayners, because wee saye by our custome that the Bayliffe doth represent the king's person ; and he is to render an accompt of his actions at the yeares end (the whole commonalty beinge called together by the ringinge of a common bell). . . . . And in case the cittie shall be besieged by the king's enemies, or the cittie shall be in need of repaire, hee ought, on the king's behalfe and for the safety of the cittie, to compel all men of the cittie and suburbs by any waie of rigour (to wit) the ablest men of body, to watch, and of the goods and chattells of all other men whatsoever at his will and pleasure to take, not respecting the libertye of anye or the ecclesiasticall goodes of any beinge or remayninge within the said cittie. And in such cases the Bayliffe himself by the viewe of sixe at least of his fellow cittizens shall doe the things aforesaid.

"We alsoe chuse one Steward, being one of

the cittie if hee may be had, otherwise a fforreyner knowne to the cittizens, or for whom fower or six of the cittizens will undertake, and before all the commonaltye hee shall take an oath to the effect following : first he shall be faithfull to the king's majestie and to the cittie ; secondly, hee shall keep, performe and defend the laws and customes approved and used in the cittie ; thirdly, he shall conceal and keepe the secrets and premonish the Bayliffe of all perylls touching the cittie ; fowerthly, hee shall give right judgment and doe justice to every one, having no respect of persons ; ffifthly, he shall counsell and ayde the Bayliffe in all things when neede requires. And the steward shall bee present at all courts to be kept and the grand inquest twice a year, if the Bayliffe requires it. And if any stranger come with any citizen and speaketh anything against our lawes and customes, let the Bayliffe or Steward command him to be silent therein ; if he refuse, let the cittizen that brought him be told that both of them depart the court ; if they refuse let the cittizen be proceeded against as disobedient and perjured, and let the straunger be cast out of court by the inferior officers ; because we use not that straungers should come amongst us to discover our seacrets for divers perils that may ensue.

"And if widows or orphans sustayne any loss

or any injustice is done unto them the Bayliffe and Steward at all times as well in court or out of court shall assist them. And the pleadings of the court ended the steward on behalf of the king and commonalty shall bidde all those that are not of the liberty to departe the courte. And the Bayliffe and Steward may give notice if there bee any secret affaires of the cittie to be done, or any matters concerninge our fellow cittizens or ourselves. And we use to have one clarke out of the cittye to wryte matters in court, and those inquisitions taken before the Bayliffe or Steward. . . ."

Thus was England made, and this brief extract from the customs of the town of Hereford in 1154 will in some small way help us to understand the England of that far day.

So things continued till in Richard I's time John, acting with the Welsh, disturbed the kingdom. Yet it was John or Henry III who incorporated the city.

In 1200, as king, John entered the town ; but later the Earl of Hereford sided with the Barons. The struggle thus begun ebbed and flowed through England during this reign and the next, and Hereford only comes to the front again with the rise of Simon de Montfort, who in 1263 took up arms against the king, and it is said that the

first acts of open hostility to the Crown were committed in Hereford. The Bishop, to whom both John and Henry III had committed the town, was seized as the Pope's man, and Simon's son, Peter, was put in command of the castle. In 1265 Prince Edward, captured at Lewes, was brought here by Simon, and kept in the castle. He was permitted to take exercise, it is said, in a meadow called Widemarsh in the north of the town, and was thus enabled to communicate with his friends, and one day rode away to Wigmore with two knights and four squires who were of his party. This happened on 28 May, 1265, being the vigil of Trinity Sunday. In the campaign that followed Hereford was Montfort's headquarters, till he tried to cross the Severn and was killed at Evesham.

The close of this struggle must have seen all Herefordshire in a poor and lawless state, and things were probably not much improved till Edward I succeeded in conquering Wales and establishing the central government firmly in the Marches. Even in 1290 we read of a Welsh chief who was brought into the city, "and in order to strike terror through the country, was drawn to the place of execution at the tails of horses, and hanged with two companions." And in these years we constantly read of oaks being

allowed from Haywood forest and stone from the king's quarries to repair the walls and the castle. But from about 1327 the castle seems to have fallen into disrepair, and probably never recovered from it. The Welsh were tamed, and the Southern Gate of England towards Wales was less important to the country as a whole. The sheriff of the county now becomes the usual governor of it. In 1377, however, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, was governor, and he begged "timber from the gentlemen of these parts for repairing and fortifying the castle." His son lost the governorship, however. During this century Hereford seems to have enjoyed an unusual and blessed quiet.

It was very different with her during the years that followed. These years resounded with the wars of Henry Bolingbroke and the "damned magician" Owen Glendower. In 1401 it was enacted that no Welshman could hold land in the city of Hereford, and in the following year we find the Welsh revolt in full blaze with Glendower as leader. Sir Edmund Mortimer, Earl of Marche, who went out against him at the head of a Herefordshire army, was beaten, and Henry IV himself had to begin that long fight which in some sort killed him. Hereford was a sort of headquarters of

the English, and Hereford was often in peril. In July, 1403, the Archdeacon of Hereford wrote to the king that all was lost unless he came in person, and in fact before the end of the month the county was horribly invaded. In September Henry entered Hereford, remaining four or five days to make arrangements for provisioning the frontier castles. He returned in October, and then set out for Gloucester. Next year the Welsh invasion was worse, and the Prince of Wales—Henry V that was to be—appeared on the scene. In July and onward his headquarters were in Hereford itself. He saved the situation, as he had a way of doing, and in 1405 the king came to Hereford and only left it to deal with Northumberland. He returned in September of the same year, and though then little was achieved, the war was over in 1409 when Harlech fell.

Henry IV died in 1413, and during the reign of his successor Hereford had peace; but when the Wars of the Roses broke out, both the town and the county naturally suffered. Hereford was not, however, a post of either side, but the Mortimer family, now merged in the House of York, having great influence in these parts, inspired a general sentiment

in favour of the Yorkists. We do not find, however, any very eager or passionate part to have been played in these wars by Hereford.

The Yorkist and Lancastrian quarrel was, as we know, fully united at long last in the person of Henry VIII in 1509. In that reign, in the incorporation of the Marches with the adjacent counties and the general administrative settlement of Wales and England, Herefordshire gained considerable territory. Her peace was not again disturbed till the Great Rebellion. By then the Castle of Hereford was in full decay, having already in the time of Henry VIII, according to Leland, lost the drawbridge. "It hath been decayed," he writes, "since the Bohuns time: it hath been one of the fayrest, largest and strongest castels in England."

The feeling in Hereford itself, as in the country, was, as we have said, almost wholly Royalist at the opening of civil war; so that Clarendon describes it as "a town very well affected and reasonably well fortified, having a strong stone wall about it and some cannon, and there being in it some soldiers of good reputation, many gentlemen of honour and quality, and three or four hundred soldiers beside the inhabitants well armed." However, Sir William Waller appeared

before it suddenly in 1643, and "persuaded them fairly to give up the town and yield themselves prisoners on quarter, without the loss of one man on either side, and to the admiration of all who then heard of it, or have since heard of it." Duncumb says this "hasty" surrender was the consequence of the defeat of Lord Herbert near Gloucester. The whole affair is rather mysterious, for Waller and his army immediately quitted the city on its surrender, and then it was almost at once occupied by the Royalists and strongly garrisoned under Lord Scudamore's brother Barnabas.

After Naseby, it was on Hereford that Prince Rupert fell back, and thence retreated into Wales. By 30 July the Scotch army under the Earl of Leven appeared and Hereford was invested on all sides. The Earl commanded the governor to deliver the city to him, but Scudamore answered he would not, and hostilities began which made little or no impression on the city. After a month a further summons was sent, and met again by a refusal. Then a general assault was determined on, but the king advancing from Worcester the Scotch army found discretion the better part of valour, broke up and quitted the county. But in 1645, just before the king's surrender of himself to the

Scotch at Newark, Hereford was taken by the Parliamentary troops under Birch, Morgan, and Taylor. With this her last fall we may leave the history of the city; for of the civil war was born modern England.

X

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL

AS we have seen, the city of Hereford owes nothing to the Romans, and we must therefore refer the origin of the Cathedral as of the city to Saxon times. Archbishop Usher states that there was a see at Hereford as early as 544, when it was a part of the archdiocese of S. David's; it is also said that in 601 a Bishop of Hereford was one of seven English prelates who attended a Synod at Canterbury under Augustine; but the history of that time is very dark, and we know next to nothing of the See of Hereford till Offa's time (755–794), when Mercia became the greatest power in England. In 786 Offa caused the Pope to establish the Archbishopric of Lichfield, thus placing Mercia ecclesiastically on a level with Northumbria and Wessex, but this arrangement did not last longer than Offa's

life, when Canterbury obtained a lasting supremacy.

It was in the year before Offa's death, however, that Hereford was the scene of a tragedy which gave to its Cathedral its great shrine, that of Ethelbert, King of the East Anglians. All sorts of stories are told of this occurrence, and it is now probably impossible to arrive at the truth. It seems, however, that Ethelbert, Offa's under-king in East Anglia, visited Offa's court at Hereford to claim the hand of Elfrida, his daughter, in marriage. The Mercian queen, however, opposed the match and insinuated that it was a mere pretext to win the great throne. Offa seems to have believed this, and to have plotted the murder of his guest, whose body he buried secretly on the bank of the river Lugg. "On the night of his burial," we are told, "a column of light, brighter than the sun, arose towards heaven," and three nights later the ghost of the murdered king appeared to a noble called Brithfrid and ordered him to carry the body to the *Stratus Waye* and to bury it in the monastery there. This Brithfrid set out to do, and after several adventures he arrived at Hereford and completed his task.

Asser, the biographer of Alfred, tells us that so many and so wonderful were the miracles

worked at this grave that Offa at last sent two bishops to Hereford to inquire into their truth. These messengers found all as had been reported, and Offa, in fear and repentance, conferred on this Saint a tenth of all his possessions, "many of which," says Asser, "the Church of Hereford now holds." As a consequence of this, we hear that about 825 Milfred, the Viceroy of Egbert, built a great church of stone in Hereford, which was dedicated to the murdered king, whose name coupled with that of the Blessed Virgin the Cathedral bears to this day.

Of Milfred's church we know nothing, nor of the bishop who is said to have been appointed to it. By 1012, however, we find Bishop Athelstan in the See and the church in ruin. A new church was then built, but we know nothing of either; but the writer of the Saxon Chronicle under the year 1055 tells us that Earl Algar and his allies the Welsh "went to the town [of Hereford] and burnt it utterly, and the large minster also which the worthy Bishop Athelstan had caused to be built, that they plundered and bereft of relic and of reef and of all things whatever, and the people they slew and led some away." Another Chronicle under the same year tells us that the Danes "burnt the city of Hereford and the Monastery

of St. Albert the King and Martyr, and slew the canons and about five hundred others." Athelstan died in the same year and was buried amid the ruins of his church "which he had built from the foundations."

The Cathedral or Minster seems to have remained in ruins quite through the Conquest till the year 1079, when Bishop Robert de Losinga began to rebuild it, but apparently without much success. For many years, till 1107, the church seems to have remained half ruinous and half rebuilt; then Bishop Raynelm continued Robert de Losinga's work, and certainly completed the nave and renovated the choir.

The next building was undertaken by Bishop William de Vere in 1186. He pulled down the Norman apses and built in the Transitional style a processional aisle of four bays that joined the side aisles of the Norman choir. He also built a double chapel at the east end. For himself he seems to have built a vast Hall in which he entertained Archbishop Baldwin when with Giraldus Cambrensis he made his Itinerary through Wales in 1188.

To William de Vere succeeded in 1200 Giles de Braose, son of William the lord of Brecknock. He built a central tower, which was at least

reconstructed in the fourteenth century by Bishop Adam Orleton. Giles de Braose lived in the time of the baronial wars and the great quarrel with King John; he was compelled to leave his See, and died at Gloucester in 1215.

His successor was Hugh de Mapenore, Dean of Hereford, who ruled for about two years, when Hugh Foliot was advanced to the See, having been Archdeacon of Salop. He completed the upper and western parts of the Lady Chapel, a work of much beauty, and was succeeded by Ralph de Magdenstan in 1234, who was succeeded in his turn by Peter of Savoy, Bishop Aquablanca, in 1240. He was a foreigner, a traveller, and if all be true a forger of papal letters. He is described by a contemporary as "ignorant of the English language, of bad character, and considered an enemy to the realm." In 1263 he was expelled the kingdom, but must have been allowed to return, for King Henry III reprimanded him in a letter for his absence, saying, "That coming to Hereford to take order for disposing of the garrisons in the Marches of Wales, he found in the church of Hereford neither bishop, dean, vicar, nor other officer to discharge the spiritual functions; and that the church and ecclesiastical establishment was in a state of ruin and decay. Wherefore, he

commanded the Bishop, all excuses set aside, forthwith to repair to his church; and that if he did not do so, he willed him to know for a certainty that he would take into his hands all the temporal goods belonging to the barony of the same which his progenitors gave and bestowed for spiritual exercise therein with godly devotion."

The builder of Westminster can have had but little patience for a man so careless of devotion as Aquablanca, who, however, returned to Hereford, and was there seized by Simon de Montfort and imprisoned. His best monument is the fine north transept of his Cathedral, which he rebuilt, and his tomb, which is one of the finest in the church.

In 1275 the greatest bishop Hereford has ever seen was elected. Thomas de Cantelupe had been Archdeacon of Stafford, and successively occupied the great offices of Chancellor of the University of Oxford and of England. He was the son of William Lord Cantelupe and Millicent Countess of Evreux. Of him Britton [1] quaintly says: "To write an account of the life of a saint in the present day . . . would be as vain as the attempt to fix the longitude or assert the discovery

[1] John Britton, "The Hist. and Antiq. of the Cathedral Church of Hereford" (1831).

of the philosopher's stone." As he was writing at the time of the Reform Bill in the nineteenth century we may fully agree with him. However, let us hear what he has to say. "From childhood to death Cantelupe is represented as all saintedness and perfection, wholly devoted to God, or rather to Catholic ceremonies; and yet the silly purblind author of the 'Life and Gests of Sir Thomas Cantelupe' pretends that he fulfilled all his worldly and professional duties in the varied offices of Chancellor of the University of Oxford, Chancellor of England, and Bishop of Hereford. He also describes the court in which Lord Cantelupe and his family were domesticated as replete with folly, immorality, and vice. 'Infamy,' he says, 'is nowhere more in credit, nor vice so canonized: it is a school of Aegyptian hieroglyphics, where beasts and monsters are supposed to signify heroique vertues.' Of a man who 'suck'd in sanctity with his milk' and whose 'childhood was a meer prologue or dum show before a tragedie of miseries,' although his whole life was exempt from every misery, according to the same author, there are few events to record and few traits of character to comment on. The book referred to, said to be made up from evidences in the Pope's library, collected at the time and for the purpose of his canonization, is

very meagre in biographical materials. It states that he was educated at home, sent to Oxford to study Latin and Canon Law, to Paris for philosophy—returned to Oxford, where he was made Chancellor ; and 'always advancing from good to better,' was created High Chancellor of England under Henry III, and was entrusted with the government of the kingdom during the absence of that monarch. Though nothing is inferred from those civil and honorary promotions by the credulous author, it must be clear that Cantelupe had some knowledge of business, of politics, of the intrigues of a vicious court, to deserve and obtain those honours and their consequent profits. He also contrived to secure a few clerical appointments, which must have enhanced his income and his labours; he was Canon and Chantor of York, Archdeacon and Canon of Lichfield and Coventry, Canon of London and Hereford, also Archdeacon of Stafford. His last advancement and honour was to the See of Hereford, 'where all voyced him their Bishop,' and where, says the same romancer, at the age of fifty-six, he was 'set up as a light in the candelstick of the See' on 8 September, 1275. Here he appears to have ruled only about seven years and not always in peace with laity and clergy. Travelling to or from Rome to obtain the co-

operation of the Pope against Gilbert Clare, Earl of Gloucester, or John Packham, Archbishop of Canterbury, or both, for with both he was embroiled in disputes, he was seized with illness at Civita Vecchia, in Italy, and died there on 25 August, 1282.

"His body, separated into three parts, as customary at that time with saints, was destined to honour and profit three separate places: the flesh was deposited in a church near the city of Florence,[1] the heart inurned at Ashbridge, in Buckinghamshire, England, and the bones conveyed to and deposited in the Lady Chapel belonging to Hereford Cathedral. Over these a tomb was erected; but his successor, who had been his secretary, finding the people prone to believe in miracles and that such craft would tend to promote the fame of his Cathedral, had a great many performed at the tomb of the saint. According to Camden, Cantelupe's fame soon eclipsed that of S. Ethelbert himself; for, as Fuller quaintly but truly remarks, 'superstition is always fondest of

[1] Our worthy despiser of saints is wrong. Cantelupe died at Orvieto, and was buried there in the Church of S. Severo. His heart was taken to Ashbridge, in Bucks, by the Earl of Cornwall, to whom he had bequeathed it. His bones were later brought to Hereford.

the youngest Saint.' To keep up or rather enhance this fame, the clergy of the Cathedral, most likely at the instigation of their Bishop, had the relics of the saint removed from the Lady Chapel and enshrined in a new and splendid tomb, in the north transept, on 6 April, 1287. To give éclat to this transition, and consequently attract more devotees, it is related that Edward II came from Calais on purpose to attend the ceremony. According to the unqualified assertions of the Catholic writers, not only visitors from all parts paid their devotions and oblations at the sainted shrine, but miracles without number were there performed. Healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, and reanimating the dead were among these. . . . In the 'Life and Gests' the number is said to be 'in a manner infinite,' and that forty persons, one of whom was a public incendiary and hanged as a just punishment for his infamy, were restored to life through the instrumentality of the Hereford dead saint. It cannot but excite the pity and contempt of every rational person to peruse such impudent fabrications and falsehoods. These, however, are not only repeated by old monastic chroniclers, but Alban Butler and other modern authors who have written on such subjects reiterate the same impious nonsense. Butler says that 'Cantelupe

subdued his flesh with severe fasting, watching, and a rough hair-shirt, which he wore till his death, notwithstanding the colics and other violent pains and sicknesses with which he was afflicted many years, for the exercise of his patience.' The rodomontade of these writers not only excites our mistrust, but their contradictory statements respecting the time and place of his death show that none of them are to be credited.[1] On the 3rd of July, 1307, about twenty-five years after his decease, a commission was appointed, to continue for four months, to make inquiries respecting his life and character for the purpose of canonization, and in which Richard Swinford, his successor, acted as solicitor. It is said that Cantelupe was the last Englishman who was canonized." [2]

And that is the way a nineteenth-century Anglican can write of the Saint of his Cathedral; nor is it different now, as a recent book on Wells and Glastonbury proves. Is it any wonder that the English Cathedrals are the dull and musty vaults, empty of love and life, they are? Is it any wonder that they do not open till nine in the morning? You cannot expect tourists before that

[1] Our Protestant friend is, as we have seen, himself in error on this very point.

[2] This, happily, is no longer true.

hour, and for what other purpose, I should like to know, save for sight-seeing, should they be open at all? The last thing we go to an English Cathedral for is to worship God or to meditate on His present glory as manifested in the works of His saints. We go, some few of us, still to wonder at the architecture, not a single stone of which is the work of the present possessors, if it be anyway beautiful or to be loved; but of those our Catholic forefathers whose "superstition" so sadly afflicted the good Britton. Let us have more such superstition, say I, if it will build us churches like Westminster Abbey or York Minster or Winchester Cathedral or the delight of Wells. It is not thus "every rational person," on whose side Britton so naïvely places himself, is wont to express his love and faith, but in factory chimneys and the jerry-building that has made a wilderness of every one of our cities.

As for S. Thomas Cantelupe, alas! his like comes not to us any more, in Hereford at any rate. The sweetness of his life, his deep devotion are strangers to us now these three centuries. His great-uncle was the Bishop of Worcester, and when he bade S. Thomas as a lad choose a profession, "I will be a soldier," said the boy. "Then, sweetheart," said the old man, "thou shalt serve the King of kings and be His soldier,

and fight under the banner of the glorious martyr S. Thomas." And under that banner he fought, and as Christ's soldier he continued to his life's end. He was canonized forty years later.

S. Thomas was succeeded in the See of Hereford by his devoted chaplain, Richard Swinfield, in 1283. To him we owe the noble shrine of S. Thomas and the north porch modelled upon it. He rebuilt the central tower, and rebuilt all but the lower portion of the nave aisles, inserting the large windows which light up the nave so well. All this he did with the money S. Thomas's shrine, the most famous in all this West Country, brought him. The curious Mappa Mundi was also made in his day.

He was succeeded by Adam de Orlton, who was consecrated at Avignon whilst on embassy. He was a friend of Roger Mortimer, and sided with the Queen, Isabella. This unhappy woman despised her husband, as indeed she well might, and she had contracted a guilty passion for Mortimer. When she found Prince Edward in her power she landed in England from France, whither she had been sent by the king as peacemaker. Edward fled, but was taken at Neath Abbey, and the Great Seal was taken from him by Orlton, Bishop of Hereford, and his Chancellor, Hugh Despenser, was brought to Here-

ford, crowned with nettles, and hanged, drawn, and quartered. Orlton was probably concerned in the king's murder. To the end of his life he was a great politician, and he died Bishop of Winchester. It must have been he or his successor, Carlton, who finished the rebuilding of the south-east transept and its eastern aisle, begun by Swinfield. In his time, too, the stalls were made for the choir, and the chapter-house, now destroyed, was built.

Carlton died in 1340, and was succeeded by John Trellick, who was of a Puritan cast of mind. He saw the Black Death in Hereford, which effectually stopped all building for many a day. He died in 1361, in which year the Black Death returned. Then the market was removed to White Cross, as we have seen, and the cross erected probably by Lewis Charlton, then Bishop.

It was Orlton who had, it is said, helped the murder of Edward II. It was another Bishop of Hereford, John Trevenant, who assisted Bolingbroke to depose Richard II, and then went to Rome for Henry IV, to explain things to the Pope.

It was a few years later, in 1396, that the priest-vicars of the Cathedral were formed into a college by the Crown. Then in 1418 the cloisters

were built, connecting the church with the Bishop's Palace, by Bishop Lacy, who, we are told, never once visited his diocese. This work was completed by Bishop Spoffond, who also built the old west window in the nave. In 1492 Edmund Audley was Bishop, and built the pentagonal chantry chapel to the south of the Lady Chapel. This was almost the last work done in the church before the Reformation brought not only building but religion nearly to an end. In 1519 the north porch was enlarged by Bishop Booth. It is an admirable example of the work of the last period of Gothic design.

A notable figure of this unhappy time was Bishop Bonner, who ruled in Hereford, however, but seven months, when he was translated to London, and died in the Marshalsea Prison. His successor, John Skipp, was twelve years in the See, "and witnessed," Britton tells us, "a reform in the church of the mummeries and interludes which had occasionally been acted within the walls . . . in ridicule of the old Catholic superstitions."

We have no means of knowing what the Reformation and the Great Rebellion destroyed in Hereford Cathedral. All we know is that what was left by the Vandals was destroyed by the Huns. In December, 1645, the church was

overrun by a rabble of Dissenters, Anabaptists, Brownists, and such, and so much hurt done that after the Restoration an appeal was made to the nobility and gentry of the county for help towards restoring what had been the House of God at least to some semblance of decency.

In the eighteenth century as much harm was probably done as in the two preceding centuries, this time not by conscious evil-doers, but by fools. Bishop Bisse no doubt meant well, but he would have been dangerous to any building; to Hereford he was a catastrophe, a visitation of God. I have not the patience or the heart to record his ineffable barbarism. His successor was no better, for he pulled down the Norman chapel that for centuries the bishops had used as their own private chantry. Then, in 1786, the western tower fell, destroying the façade and a good part of the nave. Of course, Wyatt was employed to rebuild it, and Totila did what Totila has always done everywhere: he was a sort of reformation and civil war rolled into one. It is consoling to know that his work was received with enthusiasm, and that he was followed in our fathers' time by Sir Gilbert Scott.

What, then, have we to-day in Hereford Cathedral? We have first of all, I fear, something very like a "national monument"—

something, alas! that is what national monuments always are all the world over—a wonder that was once living and is now dead, a wonder that strangers come many hundred miles to see, but that those who live within its shadow seldom use. All the English cathedrals and abbeys I have seen seem to me to be like this, but I think I have felt it more in Hereford than elsewhere. The coldness, the frigid tidiness and deadness of these places, that were once not only the Houses of God but of man also, do not perhaps strike the Englishman at home as they do one coming from abroad—from Italy, for instance, or from Spain. They are dead, their chapels are useless or at least never used, their chantries meaningless, their very form is incomprehensible when we seek to explain it by the use they are put to to-day. All the week they are empty, the worshippers at the meagre services are so few that one is astonished, one feels one is in a ruin that has little more meaning for the people who live in its shadow than have the broken castles which are not more lonely than they. It surely cannot have been for such a fate as this that they were built. But, let us be honest and admit it, they are in the hands of strangers. These utterly respectable and unenthusiastic old gentlemen, with their

domestic concerns, their wives and daughters, must often be shocked, one feels, by the enthusiasm and eagerness of the building they serve so coldly and so rarely. Yet what service there is is beautiful in its coldness, and comes to most of us at least with all the appeal of our earliest childhood—the chants, the old prick-song of the psalms, the evening hymns, the unmatchable beauty of the words. It is the spirit, though, seeing and hearing it all for the first time after many years of absence—it is the spirit of it all that is wrong, that is wanting in spontaneity and in life. Something is wanting. Not in order and beauty. No. There is nothing more lovely in the world than the English evensong, but it is without an act of worship. Yet it is not with that—never with that, that I intend to find fault, but with the wonderful coldness and emptiness that fills these vast churches with a sort of death, that fixes it as a rule that during mattins or evensong—choir services without mysteries—one must sit rigidly still; with all the inhuman spirit that I find everywhere there and that I have found nowhere else in the world. And if for me, who was bred and brought up in just that, it appears icy and without life, what must be the impression of those from afar who were bred in quite another tradition?

God forbid that I should turn on those who nurtured me, or any way foul the nest in which I was born. But is it always to be like this, are the chapels always to be mere show-places, empty of altars and used for nothing? Are our cathedrals always to remain closed till nine in the morning, and to open their doors for ever chiefly to strangers? Better that Christianity should be forced back into the catacombs than that it should perish of cold and indifference like this.

What, then, is the Cathedral of Hereford to-day? It is, I suppose, one of the most picturesque buildings in England, an almost complete museum of the various schools of architecture that have flourished since the Conquest.

Of the early Norman period, of Robert de Losinga's church of 1079 there remains certainly the east wall of the south transept, the pier arcade of the choir, and, according to Mr. Bond,[1] the triforium also.

To the late Norman period belongs the nave and choir, and very rich the work of this period is. Nothing can well be finer than the triforium, and the capitals of the pillars are magnificent.

[1] "English Cathedrals Illustrated," by Francis Bond (Newnes). This is the most admirable book on its subject I have ever read. I cannot praise it enough.

Of the Transitional period there remains the processional aisle, a part of the sanctuary and the eastern transepts, and the greater part of the Lady Chapel and crypt.

To the Early English period belong the upper and eastern parts of the Lady Chapel, a very lovely piece of work, though it lacks height. This fault or something like, obvious at that time in the whole building, which was far too gloomy, especially in the choir, came to be the great difficulty to be solved by future builders. First the Norman clerestory was pulled down and a Gothic clerestory took its place; then, about 1260, the Norman north transept was destroyed, and built "on a design which is perhaps the most original, as it is certainly one of the most beautiful in the history of English Gothic architecture." Vast windows were built on the west and north, and to the east a glorious aisle was contrived with wonderful triforium and clerestory windows. Just at the south end of the aisle Bishop Aquablanca was buried in the perfect tomb he had built for himself. It is probably to this Savoyard we owe the whole transept. There in the aisle stands the magnificent shrine of S. Thomas Cantelupe, which Bishop Swinfield built between 1288 and 1316. To Swinfield we also owe the inner porch on the north of the Cathedral, which

is copied from this shrine; the central tower, which he topped with a spire that, alas! has fallen; and the north-east transept—in fact, the whole of the upper portion of the choir and nave aisles which he filled with the great and beautiful windows we still see, thus contriving that his church should no longer be full of darkness.

Early in the fourteenth century the south-east transept was rebuilt, but carelessly and cheaply. All the money then available seems to have been spent on the choir stalls and the chapter-house, destroyed in the civil war and later by soldiers and bishops. There lie Bishops Swinfield and Charlton.

In the second half of the fourteenth century or the beginning of the fifteenth the great windows in the south transept were built, while in the middle of the latter century Bishop Stanbury built the delightful little chantry to the north of the choir. In the end of this century Bishop Audley built the five-sided chantry of two stories on the south of the Lady Chapel, and in the early years of the sixteenth Bishop Booth built the outer north porch.

The rest of the story has been told. The disasters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, both in destruction and construction, can never be helped now; but one day, perhaps, we

may get rid of the vulgar choir-screen and absurd coronal which Sir Gilbert Scott designed in the innocence of his heart.

There are other things, of course, in a town so old as Hereford beside the Cathedral—the fine half-timbered Elizabethan house, for instance, once the hall of the Butchers' Guild, now a bank. Quite as interesting is All Saints' Church in Broad Street, with its chained library; and here David Garrick was christened, for he was born in this parish. S. Martin's Church, too, is not to be missed, for it still has some fine Early English work, though it has been restored and rebuilt out of all knowledge. As interesting and far more charming is the old Red Coat Hospital in Widemarsh Street, founded by Sir Thomas Coningsby in 1614, with its gardens in which are the ruins of the Black Friars' Convent and the Preaching Cross, and Price's Hospital is still a picturesque building.

Before leaving Hereford for good no traveller should omit to visit Kilpeck Church, nine miles away. One goes by train to S. Devereux Station, and from thence to Kilpeck is but a walk. Built within a hundred years of the Conquest, the church is, I suppose, one of the rarest things in England—a true Norman building.

But it is not only to Kilpeck I would lead the traveller, but to two places also, the one above, the other below Hereford, on the Wye, in which something of that old England we lost at the Suppression of the Monasteries by Henry VIII has been preserved for us or is being gently revived, I am inclined to believe, not without benefit for us all.

A Benedictine Abbey is not to-day so common a sight in England that anyone not quite dead to all history and romance should willingly miss it. Let the humane traveller then walk any evening between five and six o'clock by the path on the right bank of Wye up stream to Belmont —Belmont truly—to hear Vespers as of old. He will not be disappointed. Here are the old plainsong tones, the monks robed in black and cowled, which were once as familiar in England as many worse things have, alas! since become.

Belmont is, I suppose, one of the largest abbeys in England belonging to the English Benedictine Congregation. There are many more monks at Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight, but they are from Solesmes, and even S. Michael's Abbey at Farnborough is the property of the Solesmes Congregation. Belmont is English.

But what are the Benedictines? They are the oldest Order of all, the very parent

Order of all the monastic Orders, and for centuries the history of this Order is the history of monasticism.

S. Benedict was the son of wealthy parents, and was born at Nursia, in the province of Spoleto, in 480, many years less than a century after the departure of the Legions from Britain. He was educated at Rome, but, disgusted, it is said, by the licentiousness of the youth of his day in that distracted city, he fled to the mountains, to Subiaco, at the age of fifteen. There and at Montecassino he founded his Order, the first Order of monks that Europe had seen. "My Order," he said in explaining it, "is a school in which men learn to serve God." It was founded on Obedience, and its business through the Dark Ages proved to be to civilize Europe as well as to convert it. His motto—the motto of his Order—was *Pax*. This Order has always been and is still not only the greatest community in the Catholic Church, but its most civilizing force, its most cultured class—as it were its aristocracy. Of the five Orders of Western Christendom the Benedictine stands first. Of the three Rules that of S. Benedict is the most profound, the most comprehensive, and the pattern of all the rest. This is the only monastic Order proper; the Dominicans, Franciscans,

Carmelites, and Augustinians are friars, and not monks at all.

This great Order and Rule was introduced into England by S. Augustine, himself a Benedictine, and these Black Monks built the great abbeys we know—Canterbury Cathedral, Glastonbury, Westminster, Reading, Colchester, S. Albans, Winchester Cathedral, and Whitby. These were their chief houses; they had many others.

In rather less than five hundred years after its foundation the Benedictine Order began to produce branches of Black and White Monks and Nuns. All these Orders, which gradually became very numerous, are really Benedictines under other names, they are Benedictine reforms; the Black Benedictines are the original Order, and these we find at Belmont. But we may divide the Order somewhat as follows:—

1. The Benedictines Proper, founded in 580, who wear a black habit; these are the original Order founded by S. Benedict.

2. Black Monks and Nuns.

3. White Monks and Nuns.

The Black Monks and nuns (2) may be summarized as follows:—

The Vallombrosans of Italy, founded in 1038, and the Silvestrines of Italy, who are monks only, founded in 1230.

The White Monks and Nuns (3) consist of the following :—

The Carthusians, founded in France in 1086; the Cistercians, founded in France in 1100: they built Tintern, as we shall see, and from them in 1660 we get the Trappists; the Camaldolese of Italy, founded in 1012, from whom we get in 1272 the Olivetans of Italy, who are monks only.

All these Orders are Benedictine and are under S. Benedict's Rule, with or without additions peculiar to each sub-Order. It would take too long to account for all the reforms that the Benedictine Order thus produced, and even to name the men who made them ; but they are concerned with some of the greatest Saints of Christendom. The greatest of English Saints, S. Thomas Becket, was a Benedictine.

It is, then, this great, universal, and ancient Order, and that in its parent stem which has always been at home in England, that we find at Belmont to-day ; and I should imagine that even the most hostile traveller will, if he have an ounce of imagination, find some consolation in the fact.

It is another and a very different people we come upon at Lower Bullingham, on the same bank of the Wye, but about a mile and a half below the city of Hereford.

Everyone, I suppose, knows by heart the ever gracious story of S. Francis of Assisi. It is indeed a Fifth Gospel, and is concerned with the most perfect Imitation of Christ that humanity has yet achieved. Born in Assisi, in Umbria, in 1182, he died there just outside the city at S. Maria degli Angeli in 1226. He was canonized in 1228. Two years before S. Francis died the Order of Friars he had founded came to England under the leadership of Agnello of Pisa, who was about thirty years of age and in deacon's orders. He had been chosen by S. Francis himself, and with him came three Englishmen who had known S. Francis—Friar Richard of Ingworth, Friar Richard of Devon, and Friar William of Easeby. They landed at Dover in 1224 in the time of Henry III; they went first to Canterbury, then to London, and then to Oxford, and so through England.

The Rule of S. Francis demanded of a man absolute poverty, obedience, and chastity. Poverty as absolute was demanded of the Order. It might possess nothing whatsoever. This was altered later to some extent at any rate, but when our Friars landed we may be sure they possessed nothing in the world. This Order of Friars is known as the First Order of Franciscans.

Now S. Francis's friend, S. Clare, in 1212 at

Assisi founded what is known as the Second Order of Franciscans, an Order of Poor Ladies, called later the Order of S. Clare, and in France Clarisses. The first convent was S. Damiano, outside Assisi. The Poor Clares, or Minoresses, as we called them, for S. Francis called his Friars Minors, came to England not many years after the Friars landed.

S. Clare and her Poor Ladies first lived under the Rule of S. Benedict with special additions, and so all Franciscan nunneries are called abbeys, and the Superior is the Mother Abbess. But in 1224 S. Francis wrote a new Rule for these himself at S. Clare's request, and this was confirmed in 1246. This Rule is harder than that of the Friars, for keeping it entails fasting all the year except Christmas Day and of course Sunday. The community subsists entirely on alms, and the Poor Clares, like the Friars, must recite the Divine Office, that is to say, the Hours of the Church—Mattins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, Nones, Vespers, and Compline. The nuns are strictly enclosed, and this Rule applies first to the Mother Abbess. The day is spent largely in the recitation of the Divine Office.

More than two hundred years after the foundation of this Order—the Second Franciscan Order—by S. Clare, S. Colette, who was born in Picardy,

her father being the master carpenter of the Abbey of Corbie, restored or reformed the First and Second Franciscan Orders in France and Belgium. The communities of women thus formed were known as Clarisses-Colettines, and it is one of them we find at Lower Bullingham. These nuns follow the Rule that S. Francis made for S. Clare, and that Innocent IV confirmed and joined to St. Colette's Constitutions. Poverty is their motto, and they perform some kind of manual labour every day.

These two wonders hidden in Herefordshire bring us back into touch with Europe as nothing else we have come upon in our journey has done. The Romans first brought us into that world. The great dates of English history, if we would but see it, are those in which Rome has come and gone : the landing of Cæsar, B.C. 55 ; the invasion of Aulus Plautius, A.D. 43 ; the departure of the Legions in the fifth century ; the return of the Legions under S. Augustine in the sixth ; the Norman Conquest, 1066 ; the Suppression of the Monasteries, 1538, that new departure of the Legions. Well, our twentieth century is, it seems, once more to witness their return.

XI

ON BOATING ON THE WYE, AND THE WAY TO ROSS

HITHERTO, so far as Hereford, that is, in our exploration of the Wye Valley, we have gone afoot or by carriage, holding to the road that for the most part from Eisteddfa-Curig onward keeps as close as may be to the river ; from Hereford, however, we shall complete our journey by water.

A journey by boat down the Wye is full of pleasure and mild adventure ; the scenery is fine, the river, in its deep valley, passing through a series of well-wooded hills, and all the way being dotted with villages and little hamlets ; each day's journey—and there are three—being closed at a considerable town—the first at Ross, the second at Monmouth, the third at Chepstow.

Such a journey in a light skiff can be begun in a wet season at Glasbury, where the river begins to be navigable, but it is more usual to start six or seven miles lower down at Hay, and even

there the traveller will often find it hard or impossible to make headway unless he start early or late in the year, or unless he encounter a wet summer. For this reason I have made Hereford our starting-place, and would recommend all travellers to do the like, unless, indeed, they postpone the beginning of their journey by water till they come to Ross. Both at Hereford and at Ross (Anchor Hotel Landing) good and light boats may be hired with competent and experienced boatmen. Such a man should, in my opinion, never be dispensed with if there be ladies in the party, and seldom if there be none, unless the travellers are remarkably well acquainted with the river. The Wye is not the Thames. Personally, I do not think the Wye comparable to the Thames for pleasure or beauty. I shall not be surprised to learn that I am almost alone in that opinion; but I imagine that I shall have the majority on my side in the question of safety.

Our Thames, king of all rivers of the known world, incomparable wherever you may be so fortunate as to encounter it for splendour or for loveliness, is a locked river; there are no weirs to be taken, nor rocks to be met with, nor runs to be negotiated; on the other hand, its depth is always consistent with boating; its bed is largely

gravel, which makes punting possible, and no one but a fool runs danger of even a wetting.

In every one of these conditions the Wye is precisely opposite. There are no locks, and the weirs are numerous, so are the rocks, and very dangerous they are, especially at such a place as Whitebrook, below Monmouth, between Monmouth and Tintern. As for the runs, they are numberless, and the smallest rain in the hills makes them exceeding tumultuous. As for the depth, the Wye is various ; very deep in parts, it is full of shallows that are often difficult to get the boat over. Of these shallows the most consistently awkward is, I think, Ash Weir, just above Tintern. And with regard to these shallows, one might think that the ideal boat for the Wye would be a canoe. As a fact, it is not so. A canoe draws more water than a skiff, is more easily overturned, and far more at the mercy of an unskilled hand. The best boat for the journey is a light skiff manned by a good and experienced boatman, such as Tom Jarvis of Ross. If the traveller is so fortunate as to fall in with this fellow, or another of his sort, all his way will be enjoyment.

To the inexperienced eye the weirs must always be disconcerting, and to the inexperienced boatman they are a real danger, whatever the guide-books may say. It will be part of our busi-

ness in this book to name the weirs between Ross and Tintern, and to give some hint of the way to negotiate them. Such falls as those at Coed Ithel and Bigsweir are not to be attempted by a stranger without instruction or at all by a careless hand. The danger of the first is obvious, chiefly because of the rocks, and the height of the fall gives some idea of what is to be attempted, while the road over, lying in the centre, is direct, and demands of you only confidence and a steady head and hand. But at Bigsweir all is different. You must not take the direct road over the fall, but plunge into the rough-and-tumble run round the island, pulling across immediately you are again in the open. If you go over the weir directly, you will run aground and possibly upset your boat, and, if lucky, escape with a wetting. No man could guess the way over this weir without teaching, and it is because the Wye is full of such places, though none, I think, so treacherous as this, that it is best to have a boatman with you.

The way to negotiate a weir, as a rule, is to steer for the V-shaped tongue of smooth and deep water which is as often as not under one of the banks. Wherever it be you must find it, and as a rule it will prove the best channel. Take it slowly, but with enough way on the boat to give

her a lift, and remember the danger is not over till you are in smooth water beyond the run that invariably lies under the weir proper. It is here that, after negotiating the weir successfully, you may easily, in your happiness, get into trouble. Careful steering and judgment, quick action and some strength are necessary to prevent the boat queering or slueing round broadside into the trouble. But with a light heart and a steady head all will accomplish itself.

So much in general for the river from Hereford to Tintern. Below Tintern no amateur should attempt to go save on the early ebb of the tide. The weirs there are unknown to the boatmen from Hereford and Ross, and they have instructions not to attempt this part of the river save on a good ebb when all the weirs are well covered. The traveller would find it difficult, if not impossible, to get a man at Monmouth or Tintern to take him to Chepstow at low tide ; and since this is so, what a fool must he be to attempt it alone ! The weirs are extraordinarily tricky there ; half-way over they slant across, and the huge mudbanks make a landing almost worse than a drowning.

The journey upstream from Tintern to Hereford—below Tintern you can always come up on the tide—should not be attempted save as a

sport. As sport it is good fun, and will tire out the hardiest, unless he knows the river as I think no amateur does. The guide-books talk of towing! But anyone who cares may see how much there is in it by observing the banks, which often for miles show no trace of a path, and are covered with thick shrubbery to the water's edge. I believe that in law a man may cut his way through on either bank, leaving what he has cut where it falls; but who is going to add this labour, and the inevitable row that would follow, to the sweat and no fun of a long tow? No, if you go upstream, you must pole over the weirs and runs, and it is not once nor twice you will get half-way up, or even to the top, only to be sent down again far more quickly than you expected. You will feel like a man on a greasy pole, and the profane silence will be oppressive.

The cost of a journey down the Wye with a man is an affair of bargain. The usual charges, including a man, are: From Hereford to Ross, 25s.; from Ross to Monmouth, 15s.; from Monmouth to Chepstow, 20s. That is three good days' journey, and you will dismiss your man at the end of each day's journey and take another to go on. If you hire your man and boat from Hereford for the three-day trip to Chepstow, it will cost you 75s. and the man's keep, say 4s.

a day. The best plan I have always found to be to hire boat and man at Hereford to go to Ross at 25s., then at Ross to hire boat and man to go to Chepstow, cost 35s., and two days' keep for the man, say 8s., total 68s. These charges include everything: the return of the boats, landing fees at Tintern and Chepstow, and, of course, the man is at your orders. He will stop anywhere you wish, and you can easily see everything worth seeing *en route*.

Instead of three days, which, in my opinion, is ample time to spend between Hereford and Chepstow, some prefer to take four days, the inclusive charge for which would be about five pounds. This allows a night to be spent at Symonds Yat or Tintern.

The distances of the three days' journey are as follows : From Hereford to Ross is twenty-eight miles ; from Ross to Monmouth twenty-one miles ; from Ross to Symonds Yat is twelve miles ; from Monmouth to Chepstow is nineteen miles ; from Monmouth to Tintern is twelve miles.

Such is the " tour of the Wye " which it will now be our business to go into in detail.

Between Hereford and Ross, at any rate, the weirs are none so bad, and beyond a general repetition here of what has been said above we shall not refer to them again.

On leaving Hereford the great landmark in our view is Dinedor Hill, and after passing Lower Bullingham and Poor Clares, Dinedor itself, nearly a mile from the river on the right bank, is our first halt, some four miles from Hereford by river.

On Dinedor, or Oyster, Hill is a pre-Roman hill fort. Finely situated some 400 feet above the world on all sides, this fort is defended by the sloping hill on all sides but one, where thepeak of Dinedor rises above it, and where a considerable rampart, 72 feet high,[1] has been set up. In 1645 the Scottish army is said to have occupied this camp, but does not seem to have meddled with it.

The village of Dinedor is situated to the southward, under the hill. The Church of S. Andrew, restored in 1868, is in the Early English style ; but the most interesting building here is the Catholic Church of Our Lady, towards Rothernes, which was once the chapel of the old Manor House. It is a building of the Tudor period so far as nave and tower are concerned, and its clock was made by the Roman Catholic priest who was chaplain here in Stuart times. It is known to this day as " Father Hillyard's clock."

From Dinedor to Mordiford is some two miles.

[1] V. C. H., " Herefordshire," vol. i (1908), p. 209.

Set near the meeting of the Wye and that delightful stream the Lug, Mordiford has puzzled etymologists for centuries. Some consider its name to be a modified form of Welsh words—Mawddwr-Fford or Mord-gwy-Fford, meaning the "passage or way through the constantly overflowing or muddy water," which is descriptive of the Lug; but Meyrick prefers another derivation: "On reflection," he writes, "I do not very much like the Welsh assigned to Mordiford. Should there be a ford at that place, I would rather have the last syllable a translation and the two previous ones corruptions, which I conceive to be more constant to Welsh idiom; Rhyd-y-Morddy, *i.e.*, the ford of the agitated(or wavy) water. Hence we have in the parish of Goodrich, Flanesford for Rhyd l'rlan, or the ford of the church. The Welsh for Oxford [think of it] is Rhydychen-mord; it signifies 'wavy or full of motion.'"

However that may be, that there is "constantly overflowing water" here cannot be doubted. In the porch of the parish church of Holy Rood we read: "On Monday, 27th of May, 1811, between the hours of five and 9 p.m., the village of Mordiford was visited by a tremendous storm of thunder, lightning, wind, and rain, by which the little river Pentalse [which here joins Wye] was swollen in some

places to an extent of 180 feet in width, with a depth of 20 feet. In passing the village it swept away a large barn and cyder mill and a cottage adjoining, when William Horsham's miller, Ann Evans, his niece, Elizabeth Greenly, widow, and her infant child, Jemima, were drowned, just above the said village, on the road leading to Woolhope. Many hundred tons of rock were blown up and carried through the said village, by which several of the houses of the inhabitants were much injured and the gardens nearly destroyed. A subscription was promoted for the principal sufferers, and a sum of 80 pounds was collected and distributed among them in proportion to their respective losses."

The church is an old building, chiefly in the Early English style, restored in 1869. The south door is Norman. In the churchyard are the remains of a great stone cross. In the south transept is a monument with a kneeling effigy and inscription to Margaret, daughter of William Vaughan of Courtfield—an ancestor of the Cardinal—"who died at her prayers in ye form as ye see her porttrature, in Larport's Court upon ye 14th day of Aprill, 1655." Here is a fine Early English window of three lights.

It was on the west end of this church from very ancient times—the list of rectors stretches back to

1295—was depicted till 1811, when it was obliterated, the form of a Dragon. In 1670 Mr. Blount, who saw it, tells us it bore this inscription :—

"This is the true effigies of the strange
Prodigious monster, which our woods did range.
In Eastwood it by Garson's hand was slayne,
A truth which old mythologists maintayne."[1]

In 1799, Mr. Cooke tells us, another tourist spoke of this prodigy.[2] "The end of the church of Mordiford is decorated with a painting of a large green dragon. An ornament so unusual and seemingly unconnected with the nature and design of a place of worship naturally excited our curiosity, which after some inquiries was gratified. The story was told with great seriousness, and is confidently believed in all its particulars by hundreds, and perhaps thousands, without ever attempting to divest it of the absurdities which oppose credibility."

But that was in a Protestant age full of superstition. That age believed that a material dragon had existed in the Eastwood, and had been "destroyed by stratagem by another animal, killed in the moment of victory by the poisonous breath of the beast." So much for the Protestants. What

[1] See Duncumb, *op. cit.*, continued by Mr. W. H. Cooke (1882), vol. ii, p. 81.

[2] George Lipscomb, "Tour through Herefordshire and South Wales" (1802).

is the true or Catholic explanation? Why, this. The church is called Holy Rood, is it not? It was founded in the thirteenth century, in an age, that is, when men were Christians, and had not orgotten Christian symbolism. In that age the Church of Holy Rood represented the Cross of the Redeemer. His head reposed on the altar, the doors were, as it were, His wounds; at the west lay His feet, and beneath His feet, at the foot of the Cross, amid the stones of Golgotha, lay the Dragon, that old serpent, as S. John calls him, which is the Devil, whom David had prophesied that Christ should "trample under His feet." You may see this pictured in a hundred pictures, frescoes, and so forth all up and down Italy; but what did the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries know of that? They had forgotten Christ and the Christian tradition. They spewed out the Catholic Church, with the result that they at once fell into superstition, and had to invent an absurd story to explain what any Italian child could have made as clear as noonday. So much for the Protestants.

Not far north-east of Mordiford is the hill called S. Ethelbert's Camp, which is said to be the place where that unfortunate king pitched camp on his journey to King Offa's court. As Hoskyns Matthews has it :—

"Where lazy Lug is lost in Wye,
Frowns like some sea-girt promotory
A headland bleak and bold.
There Ethelbert, in pride of youth
And lusty strength, if Fame speaks truth,
Elfrida's son came bent to soothe
With tale so often told.
But first to breathe his band awhile,
Nor loath to see boon Nature smile
'Midst meads so rich and rare,
He halted on this rugged height,
Gazing thence with calm delight
Far as the walls, that beaming bright,
Contained his Lady Fair.
O ill-starred Prince, to death betrayed,
While yet the fatal march was stayed
Could not thy camp afford
Some gifted sage, some goodly seer,
To whisper thee of danger near,
Or was thy soul too great for fear,
East Anglia's noble Lord?"

Close to Mordiford is Hampton Bishop, which was held by the Bishop of Hereford. The name means the "ton," or the peninsula belonging to the Bishop. The Church of S. Andrew is a building of the Transition period, with a good Norman door. Here, too, is a Preaching Cross, and near by a huge yew-tree. There are five bells, all of the seventeenth century, four inscribed in Latin: Gloria Deo; In Excelsis Gloria Deo; Cantate Domino Canticum Novum; and Gloria in Excelsis Deo.[1]

[1] Duncumb, *op. cit.*, continued by W. H. Cooke (1892), vol. iii, p. 95.

Leaving Mordiford, we pass under the bridge at the Anchor Inn, and we presently come to one of the stateliest and the loveliest of those Homes which are part of the Pride of England—I mean Holme Lacy. I suppose no one will visit this great and beautiful Manor to-day without regret, for it was sold by the old family that had owned it for centuries in July, 1909. Some of our modern ways lead to damnation. Among them is that new-fangled body-snatching and robbery of the dead, combined artfully with the ruin of the living, which Sir William Harcourt, with all the cunning of the Plantagenets, invented in an evil hour, and which has been perfected since.

Holme Lacy was for some centuries the home of the ancient family of Scudamore, which is said to have come over with the Conqueror. It was in the fourteenth century that a certain Philip Scudamore came to Holme Lacy, which till then had been in the hands of the great family whose name it bears. In 1620 Philip Scudamore's descendant John was created a baronet, and viscount in 1628. Their home was Holme Lacy till 1716, when the last viscount died, and these lands came to his only daughter, Frances, who married as her second husband Charles Fitzroy, who then took the name of Scudamore. She had by him a daughter, Frances, who married the

eleventh Duke of Norfolk. The Holme Lacy estate, however, did not come to her, but to Sir Edwyn Stanhope, Baronet, R.N., who also took the name of Scudamore. He died in February, 1874. His eldest son, H. E. Chandos, succeeded to the estate and became ninth Earl of Chesterfield.

The Holme Lacy we know was built by the last Viscount Scudamore, the friend of Pope. There is little enough of Pope, however, about the place. What we see is, I suppose, the most beautiful house in this part of Western England, possibly in all the Western counties. That it should have come to the hammer is but evidence of the condition of modern England. Nothing here can ever be again the same. Something is gone out of it, some virtue or dignity; it was too old, too beautiful, and too full of honour to suffer so rude a blow; the very trees, the very gardens tell you they have been betrayed. I, for one, shall never look on it again.

The Scudamores lie in the church of Holme Lacy near the river. It is a Norman building, as it should be, and by no means the least remarkable in this valley.

I suppose one must not forget to speak of the great pear-tree near the vicarage, an orchard in itself, they tell you, which, according to the records of 1796, yielded in that year from fourteen

to sixteen hogsheads of perry of an hundred gallons each. Its greatness is due largely to chance. It seems that long ago a branch was broken by the wind and its head fell to the ground and there took root, while its butt still adhered to the parent trunk. The vicar, seeing this wonder and "willing to encourage this lusus naturæ," had other layers made, and thus formed this strange orchard.

Close to Holme Lacy, but on the other bank of the river, Fownhope stands under the hills. The name is derived by Duncumb from Fane, meaning church, and Hope, which refers to the hills, as though some pious soul when pious souls had imagination and fancy had remembered the words of the Psalmist in one of his loveliest psalms, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help," and had named the place the church near the hills of hope.

Fownhope is an old manor of the Chandos family, who had it by marriage in the thirteenth century from the Berkeleys. It is their chantry we find to the south of the Norman tower in the curious old Church of S. Mary. On the west wall of the nave we find the carved tympanum of some Norman doorway with a representation of the Blessed Virgin with Our Lord and the symbols of S. Mark and S. John.

So we pass on down stream to the ferry under Ballingham Hill, where is the small church of S. Dubricius in the Norman style, and so to Hoarwithy with its curious, quite modern church in the Byzantine style, and so under the bridge that carries the road to Buxton, to Sellack, where a suspension bridge replaces the old ferry, and where there is a fine church dedicated to S. Jeseliac, and near the porch an Early English stone cross. Here Caradoc Court, an Elizabethan mansion, occupies the site of the old castle. North-east again we go to Fawley Chapel by Wye stream, built in the Early English style and dedicated to S. John Baptist. Close by stands Fawley Court, now a farm, a Jacobean house built in 1635, and once the property of Sir John Kyrle, the ancestor of the Man of Ross, whom we shall meet later.

From Fawley to How Caple, with its Perpendicular Church of S. Andrew, is about two miles. How Caple gave its name or got its name from a family, the first of whom we have any knowledge being Lord Walter de Capel in 1279. They parted with the property in the first year of the seventeenth century and went to Gloucester, where they became Parliament men and friends of Nonconformists. We hear of a Richard Capel who in the same century took Orders and became

Rector of Eastington in Gloucestershire. He was a Puritan, and refused to read "the book concerning 'Sports' on the Lord's Day, A.D. 1633." He resigned his living and took to practising physic.

After the Capels the Gregorys got How Caple, and the south transept in the church is called Gregory Chapel, because it was built in 1693 by Sir William Gregory as a place of burial for himself and his family. Sir William Gregory rebuilt the church, which then became a seventeenth-century building.

Round the bend of the river due south from How Caple we find Foy, with a hideous suspension bridge and a little restored church in the Decorated style. From here we may see Brampton Abbots, and the road to it and to Ross lies over the suspension bridge.

Brampton Abbots, Duncumb tells us, anciently belonged to the Crown, and immediately after the Conquest was given to the Abbey of Gloucester, whence it gets its name. What is more, it remained, both manor and property, with the Abbey of Gloucester until the Dissolution, when the Rudhalls got it, who, in Duncumb's day (1813), still held it, so that Brampton has only belonged to two owners, and, unlike most Church property stolen at the Dissolution, has not

passed from hand to hand every hundred years or so.

The Chapelry of Brampton was not in the gift of the Abbey, it seems, but in that of the Prior of the Knights Hospitallers in England. It had always been in the parish of Ross till 1671, when it was separated, with Weston, to which it was joined. The church is dedicated to S. Michael, and is set, as all churches were dedicated to that Saint, on a hill with a fine prospect over Gloucestershire and the Forest of Dean. It is in the Norman style, but restored both in 1857 and in 1908. There is a brass of John Rudhall and his wife (1506).

From Brampton Abbots to Ross is by road, I suppose, some mile and a half; by river from Foy Bridge it must be nearer four miles; but the way is a pleasant way, and the evening light delicious as, floating down stream, one comes at last within sight of the broken castle of Ross.

XII

ROSS

ROSS has been called the Gate of the Wye; I confess I never understood why; for if you wished to hold the Middle valley it would be easier to do so at Goodrich than at Ross; and as for the Upper valley, it is natural to think of Hay or Clifford as its gate. However, the Gate of the Wye Ross has been called, and the Gate of the Wye it will remain for hundreds of visitors who here strike the valley from Gloucester, to proceed down stream to Symonds Yat, Monmouth, Tintern, and Chepstow.

And whether or no Ross can properly be called Wye Gate, this is certain, that for a very large number of people it has a curious attraction. I, too, feel this attraction, and though I cannot explain it, I do not seek to deny it. Yet it is strange that a place with so little natural beauty in comparison with other towns in this valley should have achieved so great a reputation.

And I think we must explain it by the very ancient march of the roads and the more recent advance of the railway. For in antiquity Ross was, as to-day Ross is, the first town, the first place at all in our valley which the traveller coming from England did and does see. Alike in pre-Roman and in Roman times there was some sort of settlement here, while the supposed Roman road from Gloucester to Monmouth turned suddenly southward at a walled town in this neighbourhood. To-day the Great Western Railway coming from Gloucester here first strikes the river, thus laying open from Ross the beauties of the Upper and Lower valley to thousands of tourists. In this sense, then, both now and in remote antiquity, Ross is and has been the Gate of the Wye, and perhaps it is on this account that it has its title.

But if we may thus explain its title of Wye Gate, what are we to say of its name proper? Ross, in Welsh Ros, means a promontory, and would seem to refer to the fine position of the old town set lofty on a tongue of high land that here juts out into the valley from the higher land of Purland Chase. Ross is, indeed, the last northern promontory of the Forest of Dean.

It was a part of the royal possessions till Edmund Ironside presented it to the Bishopric

of Hereford. Harold, however, in part reclaimed that gift, which came in course of time and Conquest to the Earldom of Hereford and remained with it, till in Henry II's reign Roger Fitzosbern, Earl of Hereford, returned it to the See. At that time Ross was no ordinary Manor or even Lordship, it was an Honour—that is to say, it contained many manors and fees; it was a superior seignory on which other lordships or manors depended by performance of customary services. The Honour of Ross was held from the king *in capite*, and, by permission of the Crown to the Bishops, by Henry III's reign there was a market held in the Manor of Ross every Thursday, and a fair four times in the year—on Ascension Day; at Corpus Christi, two Thursdays; on S. Margaret's Day, 20 July, its vigil, and the day after; and on S. Andrew's Day, 30 November.[1] In the same reign Ross was made a free borough, and in 1305 returned two burgesses to Parliament. In that very year we come upon a quarrel that had always been characteristic of Ross, and is so still to some extent.

On the edge of the Forest of Dean, the people of Ross were used to quarrels with the Crown

[1] For all concerning Ross see W. H. Cooke in Duncumb, *op. cit.*, vol. iii (1882), pp. 98 *et seq.*

or between the Bishop and the Crown as to rights with regard to the felling of trees and the taking of deer. The nearness of the town to the Forest and the continual quarrels might seem to have encouraged a predatory instinct in the people which, I understand, is not yet wholly passed away where salmon are concerned. In 1305 Mr. Cooke tells us at Whitsuntide "a party of sixteen men felled and carried away trees from the wood of Ross Foreign in disregard of the remonstrances of the Bishop's servants. These persons were denounced in the churches of Walford, Ruardean, Weston, Hope Malrysel, and Castle Goderich until they made satisfaction in damages, giving a pledge on oath not to repeat the offence. They were also obliged to perform the penance of walking once round the church of Ross wearing only their shirts on one Sunday, and once round the market on one market day. Thomas and John Clarkson, the ringleaders in this transaction, were required in addition to bring into the churchyard of Ross all the trees carried away on the feast day of S. Mary Magdalen, and to perform the processionary penance in their shirts on two Sundays and market days."

Now the church of Ross, as we know, is very loftily placed and open to all the winds of heaven.

It was fortunate, therefore, for these sinners that S. Mary Magdalen, the patron of penitents, had her feast in July and late in that month.

Close to the west end of the church till the sixteenth century the Bishop had a manor-house or palace, as Leland calls it, where he lived when he came to Ross, and where he received the homage and oaths of his tenants. Under this palace was a prison, where priests convicted of civil or ecclesiastical misdeeds were incarcerated. This "convict prison" was by Leland's day removed to Hereford, and "the Bishop's palace at the veri west end of the paroche churchyarde of Ross, ys now in clene ruynes," he tells us.

In the second year of Queen Elizabeth the Crown had resumed its Manors of Ross and Ross Foreign, which in 1588 were granted to Edmund Downing and Henry Best to be held *in capite* on terms. These men assigned their interests to the Earl of Essex, and this was confirmed by the Crown in 1595. On the execution of the Earl the Crown granted the Manor of Ross Foreign to Thomas Crompton, Esq., and that of Ross to Sir Henry Lindley. But in 1603 the Countess Dowager of Essex purchased both manors. By this transaction the manors came eventually to the Marquis of Bath, who sold them

in 1816 to Kingsmill Evans, Esq., whose family still owns them.

The Civil War touched Ross nearly. "In April, 1643, Sir William Waller lay at Ross." After him came Prince Maurice, who entered the town with two thousand men, and later the place was occupied again by both sides. A Colonel Massie fought an action there. The most horrible experience Ross had, however, in the Civil War, was the occupation of the Scottish army, "whose ravenous rapacity, haste, and hunger were long held in remembrance." Charles I, too, entered Ross on his road from Monmouth to Hereford after the fall of Bristol.[1]

At the Restoration Ross, like all England, greatly rejoiced. "Upon Wednesday (May 29, 1660) being the happy day of His Majestie's birth, as well as his and the Common Prayer Book's Restoration, the most and most considerable persons in Ross thought it not enough to celebrate the day with praise and prayer as well as sermons, but to express their inward joy of heart the better, they caused a Face of wood to be cut, which being dressed with a long mantle and a cape with *a solemn League and covenant* upon his breast, was carried on a pole by a chimney-sweeper (instead of a hangman) dressed

[1] W. H. Cooke, *u.s.*

in his holyday apparel, that is as black as he could be ; two of the same quality carried up his train, and in this triumphant manner after Evening Prayer he was solemnly carried quite through the town, the drummer and guard of musketeers besides the pikemen attending him, till at last he was brought to the market-place, fixed in the ground, the *covenant* having the inscription—

> "'Who set these kingdoms in a flame
> 'Tis just, should perish by the same,'

and so burned to ashes with acclamations of great joy not easily to be paralleled, and that nothing might be wanting to show their detestation to that foul murdering oath, because Jonathan Smith, the Thrum vicar, sometime an apprentice in Canterbury to a tailor, and afterwards a broken draper or stocking-seller in Sandwich, upon the day of His Majesty's unhappy loss and danger at Worcester, did celebrate the memory of it with cake and ale [a good, though misguided, fool this Jonathan], some of the spearmen with a cake at the spear end, held up the wood to this pernicious oath, till that and the head to which it was fitted was burnt to ashes, and all this to show their affection to His Majesty and the Ecclesiastical Government, under which they and their

ancestors lived so happily, to God's glory and their own comfort."

"But all our praises why should lords engross?
Rise, honest Muse! and sing the Man of Ross."

In truth the Glorious Restoration brings us to this almost anonymous person who was born at Dymock in Gloucestershire in 1637, the eldest son of Walter Kyrle, of Ross, where the family had been settled for centuries, a barrister and M.P. for Leominster in the Long Parliament. He was christened John, educated at Gloucester Grammar School and at Balliol, and did much for the town of Ross, where he lived till his death in November, 1724. But let not the praises of such an one remain in dull prose. He was a sort of Mæcenas, and he owes his praise to our Horace, with a difference, Pope.

Pleas'd Vaga echoes through her winding bounds,
And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.
Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?
From the dry rock who bade the water flow?
Not to the skies in useless columns tost,
Or in proud falls magnificently lost,
But clear and artless, pouring through the plain
Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.
Whose causeway parts the vale in steady rows?
Whose seats the weary traveller repose?
Who taught that heav'n-directed spire to rise?
"The Man of Ross," each lisping babe replies.

Behold the market-place with poor o'erspread!
The Man of Ross divides the weekly bread;
He feeds yon almshouse, neat, but void of state,
Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate;
Him portioned maids, apprentic'd orphans bless,
The young who labour, and the old who rest.
Is any sick? The Man of Ross relieves,
Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes, and gives.
Is there a variance? Enter but his door,
Balked are the courts, and contest is no more.
Despairing quacks with curses fled the place,
And vile attorneys, now a useless race.

Lord B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue
What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do!
Oh say, what sums that generous hand supply?
What mines to swell that boundless charity?

Pope. Of debts, and taxes, wife and children clear,
This man possessed—five hundred pounds a year.
Blush grandeur, blush! proud courts, withdraw your blaze!
Ye little stars! hide your diminished rays.

Lord B. And what? no monument, inscription, stone?
His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

Pope. Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
Will never mark the marble with his name:
Go, search it there, where to be born or die,
Of rich and poor makes all the history.

John Kyrle was, in fact, "a character." Inheriting from his father estates at Ross and elsewhere with perhaps £500 a year—then, of course, a far larger sum than now—on leaving Oxford without a degree, he settled down in Ross to live his whole life long in extreme simplicity.

What he did not need—and it was much—he devoted to the improvement of the town of Ross and to works of charity. He rebuilt half the countryside, advancing money to his neighbours on the understanding that he might plan the outlay in house or garden. He was a great planter—it will probably never be known how much we owe to him of the fine trees and fair plantations and avenues here and hereabout. Something, however, of his enthusiasm the most casual visitor may gather, for, like most West Countrymen, his favourite tree was the elm, and it is to him we owe the fine avenues east and west of Ross Church, as well as the Prospect, which he obtained from Lord Weymouth in 1693 on a five hundred years' lease, and laid out and planted for our use.[1] He worked like a yeoman on the land, and—here was his strength—had little literary culture. He drank cider and ale and liked good English joints. He smoked a pipe, and never married—his one fault—and died of old age on 7 November, 1724. His body lay in state for nine days, and was then buried in the chancel of the church he had done so much for. There can be few lying now in any chancel in England who deserve their place so well.

[1] In 1857, after litigation, the Prospect was conveyed to the town and thus secured in perpetuity, as we say.

There has been a church at Ross since time out of mind; we have a list of rectors from 1255 and of vicars from 1276, when the present church was first built, bearing the dedication of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was restored in 1877. In the tower are eight bells, cast or recast in the eighteenth century, the eighth having been given by John Kyrle in 1695 and recast in 1761. The chancel window has some fine glass of the fourteenth century, restored in 1873. The Rudhale Chapel was built at the end of the south aisle in the fourteenth century by John de Ross, a rector of the parish, who went to Rome and later became Bishop of Carlisle. In this chapel was a chantry of the Blessed Virgin and S. Thomas of Canterbury. There on an altar-tomb are the effigies of William Rudhale (1530) and Ann his wife, of very excellent but foreign workmanship. About the tomb are set reliefs: S. Anne teaching the Blessed Virgin, S. Ethelbert with church and sceptre, S. George, S. Michael a-trampling the devil, S. Catherine of Siena, a Nun with a book and a rosary, S. Peter, the two Saints John, and S. Paul. In the midst is the Rudhale family kneeling before the Blessed Trinity, and at the end the Annunciation. On the wall above is a fine monument, "having on its centre an altar round

which were figures now missing. Below are figures of seven children kneeling at an altar." [1]

Here, too, is another and later altar-tomb of white marble with effigies of husband and wife, holding hands. Note the child lying at the basement at the head of the tomb and the figures set round about it.

On the south side of the north aisle is a chapel known as the Markey Chapel, but built by the Guys of Wilton Castle. Here are two dead elms said to have been planted by "the Man of Ross"; up their trunks climb creepers that still put forth leaves. Over the porch on the south is a "parvise," or parish-room.

The old market-hall, though restored, should be noted in the town. The greatest sight in Ross, however, is to be had from the Prospect, whence we may see north, south, east, and west for many miles. To the west across the river we have Woolhope and Dormington Hills, Caplar Camp, Rudge Hill, Perrystone, the Horseshoe View of the Wye, and Goodrich Castle. To the south we see the Dowards; to the east Chase Wood, Coppet Hill, Symonds Yat, and the church at Staunton; to the north Saddlebow and Aconbury Hills and Much Birch village.

[1] W. H. Cooke, *u.s.*, p. 124.

XIII

TO MONMOUTH

IT is at Ross and not at Hereford that heretofore travellers have generally set out to make the tour of the Wye by water. It was Bishop Egerton who began it. He was the eldest son of the Bishop of Hereford, and was Rector of Ross in 1745. Later he became Dean of Hereford and Bishop successively of Bangor, Lichfield, and Durham. During his incumbency of Ross he invited his friends, for whom he had a boat built, to see this English river, which he was used to say would compare with any other for beauty. He apparently made the tour fashionable, for by 1770 we find a traveller relating as a matter of course: "At Ross we planned our voyage down the Wye to Monmouth, and procured a covered boat navigated by three men. Less strength would have carried us down, but the labour is in rowing back." True enough. But nowadays

they bring the boats back by road, or, the river being better known, one man is able to punt or pole over the weirs.

The most famous traveller in the eighteenth century, however, who made this journey was undoubtedly Thomas Gray, the poet. "The very principal light and capital feature of my journey," he writes, "was the river Wye, which I descended in a boat nearly forty miles from Ross to Monmouth. Its banks are a succession of nameless beauties." His enthusiasm on this occasion—he was rarely enthusiastic—was better than his arithmetic. Though the beauties are, we agree, nameless, the miles are not, and from Ross to Monmouth numbers but twenty-one of them. From Ross to Chepstow is forty, and let us hope the good poet made the whole journey in that June, 1771. In August five years later Lord North, when Prime Minister, made the same tour with his family.

The first sight on the river on leaving Ross is Wilton Castle, which it is best to visit from the town before starting on the way for Monmouth. Leland tells us that Wilton Castle was built by King Stephen about the year 1141, but the manor of Wilton had been granted by Henry I to Hugo de Longchamp to hold by service of two men-at-arms in the Welsh wars,

and it seems probable that it was this lord rather than the king who built it. At any rate, his descendant, Henry de Longchamp, paid scutage for one knight's fee in Wilton in the year 1200,[1] and the Castle and manor passed with his daughter to William Fitzhugh, whose heiress brought it in dower to Reginald de Grey, lord of the Honour of Monmouth. Their descendant, Henry de Grey, fifth baron, was summoned to Parliament as Henry Grey of Wilton in 1377, and was the ancestor of the noble family which enjoyed that title till the beginning of the seventeenth century. The most famous member of this family was the thirteenth baron, Sir William Grey de Wilton, who succeeded his three brothers in the barony, and was summoned to Parliament in 1529. He was one of the commanders of the expedition made into France in 1544. Something of his character may be gathered from his conduct in the battle of Pinkie Cleugh in the Scotch war of 1547. "In this battle," says his son and successor, "he receaved a greate wounde in the mouth with a pyke, sutche as clave one of his teethe, strake hym thowroghe the tongue and three fyngers deep into the rouff of his mouthe: yet notwithstondyng hee poursued owte the chase,

[1] See Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

wheryn, whot with the aboundance of blood, heate of the weather, and dust of the press, hee had surely been suffocated, had not the Duke of Northeumberland, then earle of Warwyck, lyghted and lyfted a fyrcken of ale too hys head as they passed thowroughe the Scottische camp." Grey was one of the partisans of the Duke of Somerset, and joined the Duke of Northumberland in the attempt to place Lady Jane Grey upon the throne, but though an act of attainder was passed against him, he does not seem to have lost the favour of the Court. His defence of the fortress of Guisnes, of which he was Governor, against the French was a gallant action. He was, however, compelled to surrender it, and became a prisoner of the Duke of Guisnes, who fixed his ransom at 20,000 crowns, to raise which much of the family property was sold, and Gilbert Talbot of Goodrich offered to buy Wilton in 1576 for 6,000 crowns. The sale, however, was not effected, and Wilton remained in the De Grey family till in Elizabeth's time it passed by arrangement to the Hon. Charles Brydges, cupbearer to King Philip, second son of Sir John Brydges, first Baron Chandos.

Wilton was burnt by the rebels in the Civil War; the following is their version of the affair: "Near to the bridge of Ross Foreign stood a

very fayre, sweet dwelling-house of Sir John Bridges, which in ancient times was a castle of which held several knights' fees in this county; which now being upon mention, I shall make bold to insert something in the defence of this knight, whom the cavaliers unjustly slander with the brand of treachery. He was one that meddled not with the royal quarrell at such time when Herefordshire was overflown with that deluge, but it being a time wherein most gentlemen interested themselves on one side or another, he beeing unwilling to take his rest on his bed of ease while England and Ireland were in flames, betooke himselfe to quarrell in Ireland, as not well understanding the difference in England. At his return out of Ireland his designe was recruits for his comand there, and staying awhile at his house he found himself in great odium with those that by the late undeserving king were as undeservedly trusted with the command of the country, viz., Henry Lingen of Sutton, Esq., and one Barnaby Scudamore, a man of noe fortune, intrusted with the government of the city of Hereford, who betwixt them ordered the burning of this house, formerly the Castle of Wilton, which savoured more of spleen and malice than of souldierlike designe, in regard the place was very

unlikely to have made a garrison (it being seated not in a castle-like but house-like building), unless they would have been at the cost and paines to pull downe the house and build it a castle; but, however, burn it they would and did: after he had like a gentleman in the field had an account with Mr. Lingen, he came in the Parliament's quarters, which these malignants of Hereford knew well enough, where, when he had been a good space, he layed that souldierlike design to his great honour and their vast and lasting disreputation who in the city pretended so much of soldiers, yet were so careless of seizing on ye guard at Bisters gate in the habit of countrymen who were summoned in to break the ice about the walls, which haply tooke effect; he was not in the town, but without, with a great force as an enemy to them and their wayes, which he continued to his dying day."

The good Silas Taylor—evidently an abominable rebel persevering in evil—is rather incoherent, as his party usually is, but we shall admit that he is right about the stupidity of Mr. Lingen and Barnaby Scudamore. No doubt Sir John Brydges was a rebel, but at least he was not fighting against the Crown. They might have let him alone, and if the cat jumped their way all would have been well. In fact, how-

ever, they seem to have acted on good Scripture authority—enough to damn Silas, at any rate—saying in their hearts, He who is not with me, is against me.

After this the family of Brydges prospered greatly—Sir John's son succeeded to the barony of Chandos, and died in 1714 while the patent creating him Viscount Chandos and Earl of Carnarvon was inscribing. His son—Pope's "Timon"—commonly called "Princely Chandos," received these honours and others to boot—namely, those of Marquis of Carnarvon and Duke of Chandos. However, Herefordshire misliked them, and "in consequence of some pique with regard to his political influence in the county," he sold Wilton to the trustees of Guy's Hospital in 1722.

We set out under Wilton Bridge and through the disquieting run below it for Goodrich. But before we climb up to Goodrich we have the meagre ruins of Flanesford Priory, a Priory of Austin Canons, on the left bank of the river.

As an Order, the Augustinian Canons Regular occupy a position between that of the monks and that of the secular clergy. It was S. Augustine who gathered his clergy into a clergy house, and as they dwelt in common gave them a common Rule of life. But the early history of the Canons

is obscure. It is not till the eleventh century that we know much of them. Then S. Yvo of Chartres inaugurated the Canons Regular, and gave them a strict Rule. About that time, too, they adopted the name they bear to this day—the Canons Regular of S. Augustine. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Cathedral Chapters joined the Order. Their first foundation in England was S. Botolph's, Colchester, about 1100. But by the time of the Suppression they had some 170 houses in England, and two of their abbeys, Waltham Cross and Cirencester, were governed by mitred abbots.

"The picturesque ruins of Goodrich Castle," says Mr. Robinson,[1] "on the summit of a red sandstone cliff, which rises abruptly from the water's edge, are familiar to every tourist of the Wye, nor less familiar to every student of mediaeval history are the names of the Castle's successive lords. In truth, Goodrich is as rich in historical associations as it is in architectural beauties."

That there was a settlement here in pre-Roman times seems certain, and the Roman road, already alluded to, that ran from Gloucester via Ross or, at any rate, Weston to Monmouth, crossed the Wye at Flanesford; and there was

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

a camp here in Saxon times. Goodrich, then, has a continuous life in the history of England. It is not mentioned, however, in Domesday Book, possibly, as Mr. Robinson suggests, because of the ravages of the Welsh, for we read that all Archenfield had been laid waste. To this very ravishment we probably owe the castle, which is said to have been founded by Godric Mapsonne, who is mentioned in Domesday as holding Hulla (Howle) in the parish of Walford across the river. If so, it is a perfect instance of the way in which the Normans undertook the conquest of Wales.

"Within a century of the Conquest," says Mr. Robinson, "the castle was in the hands of William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, whose possession of it (derived perhaps through his wife, the great heiress of the Clares, who were lords of South Wales) was confirmed by King John in 1203. The Earl held it by the service of two knights' fees—a service amply fulfilled by the lifelong support which he tendered to his royal master against the insurgent Barons. Earl William was one of the most conspicuous personages of his time. Eminent in the field, as his defeat of the Barons at Lincoln and his siege of London testify, he was equally distinguished by his sagacity in the Council; indeed, he so won the

confidence of his loyal peers that they entrusted him with the guardianship of the youthful prince, Henry III. He died in 1219, leaving five sons, all of whom succeeded in turns to the earldom and died issueless. His effigy in the Round Tower of the Temple represents him as a warrior clad in chain mail and surcote, with legs straight, and holding in his right hand the pommel of his sword, the point of which pierces the head of the leopard on which his feet rest. Beside him are the effigies of his eldest son, William, and his third son, Gilbert. William was in his youth as stout an adherent of the Baronial cause as his father had been its opponent, but after his marriage with the daughter of King John became allied in heart as well as in blood with the royal party; Gilbert, together with his brother Richard (whom Matthew Paris styles the 'flower of chivalry'), were equally inimical to the king, and their hostility was adduced as a reason for refusing Walter, their younger brother, livery of his inheritance. Upon the death of Anselm Marshall, the youngest of Earl William's sons, and the tenant of the earldom for eighteen days only, the vast possessions of the family devolved on his sisters and co-heirs, the eldest of whom married Warin de Munchensi and inherited Goodrich. As their only son

espoused the cause of the Barons and fought on their side at Lewes, his lands became forfeit to the Crown and Goodrich was granted by Henry III in 1247 to William de Valence, his own half-brother and the husband of the attainted baron's only sister. Dugdale relates some quaint stories about de Valence's lawless doings in the neighbourhood of his castle at Hertford: how he poached in the Bishop of Ely's park, broke open the prelate's manor-house, and displayed his disgust at the smallness of the beer which he found there by emptying the contents of the barrels upon the cellar floor. His hands, however, were quite as apt for real war as for mischief. He fought at Lewes, and after that disastrous day fled to France, from whence he returned to take part in the successful battle of Evesham and to reap the rewards which the reinstated king heaped on his adherents. He died in 1296, and was buried under a splendid monument in Westminster Abbey.[1] His widow resided at Goodrich, and we find her there in the year after her husband's death entertaining her friends in sumptuous style and feeding daily a score of poor neighbours. Among the guests was her son, Aymer de Valence,[2] who took an active

[1] In St. Edmund's Chapel.

[2] Also buried in the Abbey in the Sanctuary in a marvellous tomb.

part in opposing Piers Gaveston and in condemning Thomas Earl of Lancaster to death. He himself was murdered in 1323 while attending Queen Isabel in France, and his Castle of Goodrich then became the property of his niece, Elizabeth Aymer, who carried it in dower to her husband, Richard, second Baron Talbot.

"'Richard Talbot of Goodrich' was summoned to Parliament in 1331. He is thought to have expended a considerable part of the ransoms obtained from prisoners in the French wars on the improvement of the fortress. He was the founder of the Priory of Flanesford, and, dying in 1356, was succeeded by his eldest son, Gilbert, who served with the Black Prince in the French wars. His grandson and eventual heir was Sir John Talbot, the first Earl of Shrewsbury, whose martial achievements are a matter of history. The hero of forty battles, foremost in the brilliant but profitless campaigns of the fifth and sixth Henry, he yet survived to the advanced age of eighty, and was slain sword in hand at the Battle of Châtillon in 1453. His son and successor met with the same fate at Northampton in 1460, and as he was fighting in the ranks of the Lancastrian army Goodrich reverted to the Crown, and was granted by Edward IV to that

zealous Yorkist, William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke.

"John, the third Earl of Shrewsbury, contrived to make his peace with the king and obtained from him the restoration of his estates, from which time until the seventeenth century Goodrich continued with his descendants. It ceased, however, to be their principal seat, though we find it occupied in Queen Elizabeth's reign by Gilbert Talbot (afterwards seventh Earl) during the lifetime of his father and after his own marriage with Mary Cavendish, the eccentric daughter of a still more eccentric mother. The letters which passed between husband and wife are curious and incidentally afford us information about the then products of the neighbourhood. 'A Monmouth cap, a rundlette of Perrye, a payer of Rosse bootes' were deemed no unfitting gifts to pass between a countess and her lord.

"On the death of Gilbert, seventh Earl of Shrewsbury, in 1616, Goodrich became the property of his daughter and co-heir Elizabeth, wife of Henry Grey, Earl of Kent, and thirty years afterwards was the scene of one of the most desperate sieges which took place in Herefordshire during the Civil War. The fortress was at first in the hands of the Parliament, but in 1646 was occupied by a garrison under the

command of that eminent loyalist, Sir Henry Lingen. Colonels Kyrle and Birch made a joint effort to capture the castle in the month of March, but only succeeded in burning down the stables and outhouses and establishing active blockade. It soon became evident that the place could not be reduced by mere delay; the castle was strong and well victualled and its defenders in good heart and ably led. Birch had to procure fresh supplies of ammunition and more powerful pieces of artillery before any effect could be produced, and it was only when its numbers had been much reduced by successive sallies and the powder and shot almost wholly expended that the garrison was forced to surrender. On the last day of July terms were proposed and accepted by which the lives and the honour of the brave defenders were preserved, and four days afterwards Colonel Birch was permitted to take possession of the battered fortress and the thirty barrels of beer which seem to have formed its chief contents. Besides the Governor, Sir Henry Lingen, there were fifty gentlemen within the castle whose names clearly show to which side in the struggle the chief families of the county were inclined. The Pyes, the Lochards, the Bodenhams, the Wigmores, the Vaughans, and the Berringtons each and all had sent some

members of their houses to assist in retaining for the king this most important fortress. On the 25th of August the Parliament ordered Mr. Brown and Mr. Selden to acquaint the Countess of Kent of the necessity of demolishing the castle, and early in the following spring it was finally resolved that it should be totally disgarrisoned and slighted. The ruins continued in the family of Grey till the death of Henry Duke of Kent in 1740, when they were sold to Vice-Admiral Thomas Griffen."

The original form of the fortress can be better apprehended on the spot or studied with a plan than described here. It consisted of a parallelogram flanked with round towers and guarded to landward by a deep moat hewn out of the living rock and crossed by a drawbridge. Chapel, hall, kitchen, and living apartments formed a part of the buildings, and the keep was of the usual Norman type, square with slightly projecting turrets at the four corners. The old custodian, who has kept the ruin now for many years, is full of quaint stories, and if you, or rather your boatman, will let him he will talk for hours. No one making the Wye tour should omit to visit Goodrich.

As for Walford on the other side of the river, it gets its name from the very ancient ford—the

Welsh ford—which crosses the river here opposite Goodrich. Mentioned in Domesday, it was then part of the episcopal estate, and later the parish became part of the Honour of Ross, and was held by the Bishops of Hereford *de Rege in capite*. But the See of Hereford was deprived of Walford in 1559.

The Church of St. Leonard is an ancient building in the Transition and Early English styles with chancel with north aisle or Kyrle Chapel, a nave of four bays, with a north aisle, north and south porches in Perpendicular style, and an embattled Transition tower.

Walford Court Manor was in the possession of the Kyrles so early as the reign of Edward IV; it was the home of that "stronghearted rebel," Colonel Kyrle. Oliver Cromwell slept there more than once, and a room with an oriel window is still known as Cromwell's Chamber. The Hall Court is the modern residence, built in 1700. It is approached by a fine avenue of elms planted by the Man of Ross. In the grounds is a twelfth-century cross, once in the churchyard of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, which was destroyed in the Civil War. Wytha', or Whitehall, is a very beautiful timbered house of the Tudor period.

Leaving Goodrich, we proceed down stream

under Kerne Bridge, which has taken the place of the old Welsh ford. Then round a bend of the river we pass under the railway bridge. These and all bridges should, especially if the river be at all swollen, be negotiated with the utmost care—if necessary the boat's nose being turned up stream and the bridge taken backwards to enable the sculler to let the boat through gently pulling against the stream.

Courtfield, the home of Cardinal Vaughan, is the next place we come upon round a prodigious bend of the winding river. It lies just under Welsh Bicknor, with Ruardean opposite to it towards the east and English Bicknor towards the south.

Before reaching Courtfield, however, we come upon our first weir below Ross, the Lydbrook, which should be taken towards the left bank. It is not very formidable, but doubtless needs care and good sense if it is to be crossed without mishap.

William Coxe, Rector of Bemerton, who made this tour at the end of the eighteenth century and wrote a book about it,[1] very carefully notes this bit of the river, for it is here we pass out of Herefordshire on the left bank into Gloucestershire. This takes place just above the great turn in the river above Courtfield.

[1] "An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire" (1801).

According to tradition Courtfield is the place where Henry V was brought up in the care of the Countess of Salisbury, and Mr. Coxe tells us that for that reason its name was changed from Greyfield to Courtfield. He adds: "The house is of a much more modern date than the period of Henry the Fifth, and does not contain anything which recalls the memory of those times. The tattered remains of a rich bed, called the bed of Henry the Fifth, were being shown at this place, and his old cradle was preserved at the house of the Rev. Mr. Ball, Rector of Newland, in the vicinity, which descended to him from his ancestor, one of the rockers."

Welsh Bicknor Church contains a curious sepulchral effigy without an inscription or coat-of-arms which has aroused the curiosity of antiquaries. It is the recumbent figure of a woman in stone, placed on the floor, and according to tradition it represents the Countess of Salisbury, who resided at Courtfield and was the reputed nurse of Henry V. She is dressed in a loose robe; and at her head were two figures, one of which is gone; the other represents an angel.

"The person here interred," according to Mr. Coxe, "was probably Margaret, daughter and heir of Thomas Lord Mortimer. She espoused

Sir John de Montacute, second son of William, first Earl of Salisbury, and held the manor of Welsh Bicknor until her death, which happened in 1395. Henry was born at Monmouth in 1387, and being a sickly child was probably sent to Courtfield, in the parish of Welsh Bicknor, for a change of air, under the care of Lady Montacute, who was equally with the noble infant descended from Edward I. Although she was Countess of Salisbury herself, yet being daughter-in-law of one Earl, sister-in-law of another, and mother of a third, she may have been easily miscalled by that title."

A quarter of a mile below Welsh Bicknor is a run known as the Green Water. Here Rosemary Topping is right ahead. It is the beginning of the finest scenery on the Wye; for after passing Rosemary Topping you come upon the Coldwell Rocks, a fine, bold, wooded gorge, first the Needle Rock and then others, till you see Symonds Yat, the highest of all, in the distance. Just here is the Jet Weir, at the beginning of the Huntsham Loop, the great bend of four miles, which leads you at last to the pleasant Inn at Symonds Yat. The distance by land is not more than a mile, but the way is steep. Huntsham Loop brings you back into the parish of Goodrich on the other side through the Old

Weir and the mouth of the Garren Brook and Old Forge, a ticklish run.

Who shall well describe this rich and striking scenery? Certainly not the present writer. Let us hear what a more reverend pen can do.

"From the church of Welsh Bicknor we proceeded," says Mr. Coxe, "without interruption to New Weir; during this course the scenery of the banks assumed a new character; hitherto it was of a wild and pleasing cast; the rocks which formed the rising banks were so entirely clothed with trees as to be seldom visible, or only seen occasionally through the impending foliage; but in this part of the navigation the rocks became a primary object and the stream washed the base of stupendous cliffs. Among these the most remarkable are Coldwell Rocks and Symond's Gate, forming a majestic amphitheatre, appearing, vanishing, and reappearing in different shapes and with different combinations of wood and water; at one time starting from the edge of the river and forming a perpendicular rampart; at another towering above woods and hills like the battlements of an immense castle, as much more sublime than Goodrich as nature is superior to art.

"Here the meandering course of the river is peculiarly striking; from the bottom of Symond's Gate to the New Weir the direct line is not more

than 600 yards, but the distance by water exceeds four miles. At this spot the company usually disembark, mount the summit, and, descending on the other side, rejoin the boat at New Weir. From the top of Symond's Gate, which is not less than 2,000 feet in height above the surface of the water,[1] the spectator enjoys a singular view of the numerous mazes of the Wye, and looks down on the river watering each side of the narrow and precipitous peninsula on which he stands.

"In this part of the river the sides of the hills and the bed of the river were strewed with enormous fragments of rock which almost obstructed the passage of the boat and rendered the current extremely rapid. For some way the foreground of the landscape was comparatively tame and dull, but the background was still formed by the sublime rocks of Coldwell. At the ferry at Hunston, which is only one mile from Goodrich by land, but seven by water, the rocks disappear and are succeeded by a ridge of eminences, covered with an intermixture of heath and forest, until we passed the pleasant village of Whitchurch and reached the New Weir."

[1] It is some 720 feet above the river and 783 feet above the sea. If Mr. Coxe saw it 2,000 feet, we understand his enthusiasm, for "thinking makes it so."

No amount of description will bring Symonds Yat so well before the reader as Mr. ——'s picture of it. I therefore forgo my attempt and am content with Mr. Coxe's. As for Whitchurch, it is a pretty place, and on summer evenings people row up here, go to church, and return by river. It is a pleasant custom.

The scenes of New Weir equal in romantic beauty the scenery at Coldwell Rocks; the deep vale in which the river flows is bounded on one side by the Great Doward, a sloping hill sprinkled with limekilns and cottages and overhanging some ironworks seated on the margin of the water; on the other rises the chain of precipices forming the side of the peninsula which is opposite to Coldwell Rocks and vies with them in ruggedness and sublimity.

It is just here we come into Monmouthshire, on both banks, though only for a short distance.

XIV

MONMOUTH

MONMOUTHSHIRE, which gets its name from its capital town, though now legally an English county, is administratively outside both England and Wales. For instance, the present census was ordered to be taken in England and Wales and the county of Monmouth. It is, in fact, the southern link between the two countries, and alike belongs to both in scenery and language, though in history it is rather Welsh than English. It was *par excellence* the country of the Silures; it gave the Romans much trouble, and indeed they established a Legion within its boundaries at Caerleon-on-Usk, while the Saxons seem to have made but little impression upon it. The Normans were more fortunate; they, in fact, quickly overran the whole district of Gwent, which we call Monmouthshire, and the conquest of South Wales may be said to have advanced up its valleys.

We shall have, however, little to do with the shire of Monmouth; for though we visit the county town, the river Wye is for the greater part of its course, after it enters the county, its boundary, having on its right bank Monmouth, but on its left Gloucestershire; indeed, for many miles Offa's Dyke runs along the left bank of the Wye from Redbrook southward.

The town of Monmouth, anciently called Alermynwy, and later Trefynne and Monnowmouth, for the river Monnow here joins the Wye, is to-day rightly devoted to the memory of its greatest son, Henry V. It is supposed to have been the Roman station called Blestium, and it is certain that it has been a fortified town for a very considerable period of time. The town was easily fortified, set as it is in the angle of two rivers, and we know the Saxons held it for some time, while in the days of the Norman Conquest we are assured by Camden that it had much importance. It was the birthplace of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Bishop of S. Asaph and the compiler of the British Chronicle. Henry III annexed the Barony to the Earldom of Lancaster when he made his son, Edmund Plantagenet, Earl. John of Gaunt succeeded to it by marriage with Blanche, daughter of Henry Duke of Lancaster, and in those days it was said to be the "most

considerable private patrimony in Christendom." Edward II was confined in Monmouth Castle when Queen Isabella took him prisoner in 1326, and Henry V was born here.

Altogether Monmouth was a considerable place, and Leland has recorded that in his time the walls were still standing though in ruins, the moat was entire, and the four gates—Monk's Gate, Eastern Gate, Wye Gate, and Monnow Gate—were still very noble and picturesque features of the town. Only one remains to remind us of what we have lost—the Monnow Gate, which is among the noblest antiquities in the county.

No visitor to Monmouth is likely to overlook its connection with Henry V, the very names of streets and squares insisting on his remembrance of this fact; and Henry V for most of us means two miracles — Agincourt and Shakespeare. Wherever English is spoken, with whatever accent it is uttered, these two names are familiar in our mouths as household words; and if every child rejoices with England in Henry V, every man and woman, I suppose, loves Fluelen. "I can tell you there is goot men porn in Monmouth," and Fluelen was one of the best of them. Was it not he, "by Cheshu," who found the likeness of Monmouth to Macedon? "If you look in the maps of the 'orld," as he told Captain Gower on

the field of Agincourt, "I warrant you sall find, in the comparisons between Macedon and Monmouth, that the situations, look you, is both alike. There is a river in Macedon; and there is also moreover a river at Monmouth: it is called Wye at Monmouth; but it is out of my prains what is the name of the other river; but 'tis all one, 'tis alike as my fingers is to my fingers, and there is salmons in both. If you mark Alexander's life well, Harry of Monmouth's life is come after it indifferent well; for there is figures in all things. . . ." And we know that Fluelen also, like certain other Welshmen he speaks of, "did goot service in a garden where leeks did grow, wearing leeks in their Monmouth caps; which, your Majesty knows, to this hour is an honourable padge of the service; and I do believe your majesty takes no scorn to wear the leek upon Saint Tavy's day."

These Monmouth caps, Fuller tells us, were "the most ancient, general, warm, and profitable covering of men's heads in this island, many thousands of people being maintaneed thereby. It was enacted, 13th Eliz. c. 19, that they should be worn by all persons (some of worship and quality excepted) upon all Sabbaths and holy days, on pain of forfeiting ten groats. This act was repeated 39th of the same reign. The Capper's church doth still remain, but on occa-

sion of a great plague the trade was removed to Bewdley in Worcestershire."

Henry V, who is all Monmouth, was born in the castle, but, as we have seen, a fortress has existed here since before the Conquest. The ruins stand on the ridge of a height overlooking the Monnow, and are scarcely visible from the modern town; the best view of them being from the right bank of that river, whence in Coxe's time "they appeared to have some magnificence." He writes: "The present remains are still considerable, but principally covered with tenements, stables, and out-houses. Although the whole roof and parts of the side walls are fallen, yet the site of two remarkable apartments can be traced with exactness; one in which Henry V was born and the other adjoining to it, which, within the memory of several inhabitants, was used for the assizes and was not less than sixty-three feet in length and forty-six in breadth. The apartment which gave birth to the hero was an upper story, and the beams that supported the floor still project from the side-walls; it was fifty-eight feet long, twenty-four broad, and was decorated with ornamented Gothic windows, of which some are still remaining and seem to be of the age of Henry III. The walls of this part are not less than ten feet in thickness. About fifty years ago

a considerable portion of the southern wall fell down with a tremendous crash, which alarmed the whole town, leaving a breach not less than forty feet in length. On the ground floor beneath are three circular arches terminating in chinks, which have a very ancient appearance, as may be seen from the inside view; at the north-eastern angle within a stable is a round tower six feet in diameter, which was once a staircase leading to the grand apartment.

"To the right of the apartment which gave birth to Henry V a house occupies part of the ancient site: in the house and cellar may be traced vestiges of the original walls, and their massive structure is worthy of particular observation; they are from six to ten feet in thickness, formed of pebbles and mortar in the manner of Vitruvius, and are so closely compacted as not to yield in hardness to stone itself."

His account of the history of the castle may here be given. "A castle existed at Monmouth at a very early period, which retained in subjection the neighbouring districts then included in the county of Hereford; at the time of the Norman Conquest it probably belonged to the king; for in Domesday Book, under Herefordshire, four caracutes of land in the castle of Monmouth, part of the royal demesne, were given in

custody to William Fitz Baderon, who possessed two lordships in Herefordshire and twelve in Gloucestershire. His son William as well as all his successors were surnamed de Monmouth from this castle; it continued in the possession of his descendants till the reign of Henry III, when John de Monmouth was the proprietor."

During the civil wars which distracted his long and weak reign Monmouth Castle was occasionally besieged and occupied by both parties; in these contests it suffered repeated demolitions, of which one instance is recorded by Lambarde. "The citie had once a castle in it, where in tyme of Henry III Richard the erle marshal associatinge to him other noblemen, and movinge warre against the kinge for that he more esteemed strangers borne then his natural subjects gave him a sharpe conflicte and slew sundry of his souldiers. Not long after the erle of Gloucester having forsaken the erle in Leycester, took for his succour the same castle and fortified it; but Symon [de Montfort] speedily following, assailed, toke and raised it to the ground. Thus the glorie of Monmouth had cleane perished, yet has it pleased God longe after in that place to give life to the noble kinge Henry V who of the same is called Henry of Monmouth."

In the times of civil discord Monmouth Castle

was an object of such consequence to the Royal party that John de Monmouth, having no issue male, was induced to resign the castle and honour to Prince Edward and his heirs for ever in consideration of certain lands granted for life. In 1267, on the surrender of Prince Edward, Henry III granted the castle of Monmouth, together with many other possessions, to his younger son, Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster, and the grant was confirmed by Edward I in the first year of his reign. Edmund left two sons—Thomas, beheaded for high treason, and Henry, who obtained the castle of Monmouth and those parts of his father's property not confiscated on his brother's attainder; he increased his possessions and influence in Wales by espousing Maud, daughter and heiress of Sir Patrick Chaworth. He died in 1345; his son Henry, before created Earl of Derby and Lincoln, succeeded to his estates and honours, and added still further dignity to his illustrious family; he was the first Duke of Lancaster and the second peer raised to the ducal title, Edward the Black Prince being the first under title Duke of Cornwall.

Edward III in the twenty-first year of his reign erected the county of Lancaster into a palatinate, granting the Duke for life regal rights

and other privileges, and decreed that the Duchy should be governed by his own officers. His vast possessions were divided between his two daughters, Maud and Blanche; but Maud dying without issue, the whole property devolved on John of Gaunt, third son of Edward III and husband of Blanche. He was created Duke of Lancaster, obtained a grant of the *jura regalia* in perpetuity for the Duchy and a release of the estates forfeited to the Crown on the attainder of Thomas. After the death of Blanche he married Constantia, daughter of Pedro el Cruel, King of Castile, and in 1386 assumed the regal title, which he afterwards resigned, but was amply indemnified by the marriage of his daughter Catherine with Henry III, King of Spain. He died in 1399, and his royal alliances and great riches—he is said to have had forty-seven mules laden with chests full of gold for his second payment from Spain—far exceeding those of any other subject, contributed to raise his son Henry to the throne. Monmouth Castle was a favourite residence of John of Gaunt and of his son, Henry Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry IV.

Its great fame, however, fell upon when Henry V was born there in 1387. His father created him Duke of Lancaster and lord of Mon-

mouth Castle. Henry V enlarged the Duchy with the estates which he inherited from his mother, Mary, sister and co-heiress of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and obtained an Act of Parliament that all grants of offices and estates should pass under the seal of the Duchy. All this Henry VI inherited. Edward IV considered the title and estate forfeited by the attainder of Henry VI, and by Act of Parliament appropriated and united the estates to the Crown, and annexed the county palatine. In the fifth year of his reign he granted the castle in tail male to William, Lord Herbert, afterwards Earl of Pembroke, but it again reverted to the Crown, and formed as before parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster, which Henry VII inherited as king. He repealed the Act and entail of Edward IV, again separated the Duchy from the Crown, and entailed it on himself and his heirs; since which period, except during the time of the usurpation, it has continued in the Crown, though under the management of distinct officers.

At some period, however, the castle was alienated from the Duchy, and became private property. It played no part in the Civil War, when Monmouth was taken by the Parliament forces by treachery, so that it is said when Cromwell himself came to Monmouth a man

named Evans tried to shoot him, but was unfortunately prevented.

The Parish Church of S. Mary was the church of the Priory. It is described by Speed as "built with three iles, and called the Monkes Church, in which the fabulous history of Great Britain was written by Geoffrey, surnamed Monmouth and Ap-Arthur." As a fact S. Mary's is the church of the Priory of Black Benedictines, but it was rebuilt in the middle of the eighteenth century. The tower and lower part of the spire are the only remains of the ancient building. In this old building hung the bells of Calais. For it is told that when King Henry sailed away from that port after his victories the burgesses were so glad to be rid of him that they rang their bells. When the king heard the bells in the Straits he put back, unhung them, and brought them to England, presenting them to the Benedictines in his native place. Ruins of this monastery remain to the north of the church. The Priory was not English but Angevine. It was founded in the reign of Henry I by Willende, lord of Monmouth, and was a cell to the monastery of S. Florence, near Salmur, in Anjou.

Tradition still points out a small apartment of the Priory as the library of Geoffrey of Monmouth; it bears on the ceiling and windows

remains of former magnificence, but is certainly not so old as Geoffrey's time. He was born here in Monmouth, however, and probably educated in the monastery, of which in all probability he was a monk. He became Bishop of S. Asaph in 1152. His "Historia Britonum" was a considerable influence in the consolidation of the people of England. His legend of the common origin of Briton, Teuton, and Norman did much towards our spiritual unification. Translated by Geoffrey Gaimar and by Wace into Anglo-Norman, within a hundred years Layamon and Robert of Gloucester had given it an English dress, and all our Chroniclers followed him as a perfectly trustworthy historian. He gave Shakespeare his plots through Holinshed. Milton, Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Swinburne have all been in his debt, and, in fact, his influence on the content of English literature is scarcely to be exaggerated. In these our days, when the very unity of England seems to be at the mercy of a bitter class hatred, fanned for their own advancement by wicked men, we may well envy our ancestors the possession of so noble a reconciler of men's hearts.

A Free School, or Grammar School, was founded at Monmouth in the reign of James I by William Jones, haberdasher, who had made a

considerable fortune by his own exertions. The tradition of the town, according to Coxe, "gives a singular story of its establishment. He was a native of Newland, in Gloucestershire, but passed the early part of his life in a menial capacity at Monmouth; from this situation he became shop boy to a merchant in London, where his acuteness procured his admission to the compting house, and he performed the office of clerk with such diligence, skill, and fidelity that he was employed by his master as a factor abroad, and afterwards taken into partnership. Having raised an ample fortune he quitted London, returned to Newland under the appearance of great poverty, and made an application to the parish; being tauntingly advised to seek relief at Monmouth where he had lived at service, and would find persons disposed to assist him had he conducted himself with propriety, he repaired thither and experienced the charity of several inhabitants. In gratitude for this reception he founded a free school on a liberal establishment: to the master a house with a salary of £90 a year; to the usher a salary of £45 a year with a house; and to a lecturer for the purpose of inspecting the almshouses, reading prayers, and preaching a weekly sermon, an excellent house and garden, with a salary of £105 a year. He also built alms-

houses for twenty poor people, leaving to each 3s. 6d. a week."

Near the Monnow Gate, itself perhaps the most picturesque building left in Monmouth, stands the ancient Church of S. Thomas, in part a Norman building. Near by is a beautiful cross, which should not be missed.

But the best thing left in Monmouth is Monmouth itself. A quiet old town, it carries the centuries lightly enough, yet with a certain gravity that is altogether charming. Of all the towns on the Wye, not excepting Hereford, it pleases me most. Was it not the birthplace of Shakespeare's hero? Was it not the county town of Fluelen, that Sir David Gam who at Agincourt, seeing King Harry in danger from the Duke of Alençon, interposed, and, like the gallant Welshman he was, received the sword meant for his king in his own breast, and in the agony of death was knighted there on the field? Lying in Monmouth, listening to the bells playing "Our King went forth to Normandie," it is almost possible to believe that the Radicals are as dead as the Philistines, and our old heroic England ready once more to face whatever God may send her, and with a light and cheerful heart.

XV

TO TINTERN

IT is that part of the Wye below Monmouth, between Monmouth and Tintern, that offers the best excitement to the boatman. There are the steep and difficult weirs of which we have already spoken, and which no traveller should attempt unaccompanied or without experienced advice. Below Tintern the river should not be attempted at all save on the ebb tide, and at the beginning thereof to boot. The Wye, like other rivers falling into the Severn, is subject to a bore when the tide begins to flow, and woe to the boatman so foolish and heedless as to be caught by it between the mudbanks. On the other hand, there is danger, too, at low water from the weirs, which below Tintern are extremely difficult and almost unknown. For these reasons no boating should be attempted between Tintern and Chepstow save at high water on the first of the ebb.

The first run, and it is a long one, below Monmouth is the Upper Benches, and in time of a high river it requires some negotiating, especially as only a quarter of a mile below is the Lower Benches. Just here is the old church of Penallt, whose dedication is unknown. The most curious thing in Penallt, however, is the great chestnut-tree, at the foot of which is a stone bench where it is the custom to rest the dead on the way to burial. It has for many centuries been the custom thus to rest the corpse on this seat, while the mourners stand round and sing a psalm.

Below the Lower Benches we encounter in half a mile the rough weir of Redbrook, by a pretty village. There follows a stretch of river known as the Whitebrook. It looks absolutely harmless, but in fact is the most dangerous stretch of the whole river, for here, just awash, are sunken rocks enough to drown a man-of-war. The safe road lies all the way about two sculls' length from the right bank. After passing Whitebrook we encounter Florence Weir, then New Weir, and then Bigsweir. The last is a considerable affair, and should not be taken at all in any state of the river, the true road lying round the island on the left, where it looks worse, but is in fact safe enough.

On the bend of the river here we come to Llandogo, a pretty village surrounded by finely wooded scenery, three miles from Tintern. The tide ebbs and flows to this place, and sometimes even smooths Bigsweir. The church is modern. The village is backed by a steep wooded hill up which a serpentine path and roadway of nearly two miles in length lead to the top of the wood, where the cascades known as the "Cleiddan Shoots" begin, and the waters of which, in rainy seasons, rush down the deep recesses of the ravine in many fantastic forms until they reach the village.

Just below Llandogo we come to the most famous weir on the Wye, the steepest and most dangerous—Coed Ithol. The river slides over almost sheepishly between two rocks and we with it right in the midst.

Three more weirs have to be taken above Tintern, namely, Brock Weir, Llyn Weir, and Ash Weir. Over the last the wise boatman will pole, because of the sunken rocks. So we come past Tintern Parva under Chapel Hill to Tintern Abbey.

I suppose it is inevitable that all who, having heard of Tintern in their childhood, come to it in manhood for the first time should be disappointed. It is the common lot. Yet, unlike

most famous places, Tintern, though at first sight it appears less than we had thought, never, I think, disappoints in the end. For me, at least, it remains in memory, with Hereford Cathedral, as one of the things really worth seeing on the whole course of the river. I suppose as a ruin it excels everything of the kind in a kingdom of ruins; yet it is small in size when we remember Fountains, and it has neither the historic antiquity nor the majesty of Glastonbury. No king nor hero lay here as at Waltham or Hyde, nor has it even the weight of Reading or the significance of Westminster. It was a Cistercian House, and though founded in 1131, as it is supposed, by Walter Fitz-Richard de Clare of Chepstow, the present buildings belong only to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The Cistercians were a reform of the Benedictine Order. We have already spoken very briefly of the original Order, which we found still at work, after more than a thousand years, at Belmont, near Hereford. It is now necessary to say something of the various branches or reforms that the original Black Benedictines threw out. The first of these reforms was made in 910, at Cluny, by William the Pious, Duke of Aquitaine, and it was out of this reform, a reform, in its turn, of it, that the Cistercians

arose. For in 1098 Robert, Cluniac Abbot of Molesme, founded a community in the desert of Citeaux, Beaune, with the idea of restoring the strict Rule of S. Benedict. Dying in 1110, it was his successor who published his statutes in 1119. This reform became known as the Cistercian Order. They founded Citeaux, as Benedict had decreed, with an abbot and twelve monks. This abbot was called Pater Universalis, and the Order, unlike the Benedictines Proper, was vowed to absolute poverty, not only personal but corporate. The Cluniac reform, like the Black Benedictines from which it sprung, had devoted itself to learning. Not so the Cistercians. They toiled by the labour of their hands, and have been called the "Puritans of the monasteries."[1] The offence given to the older Orders by this new Rule may be imagined. Especially the vow of poverty offended, and it is possible that Citeaux, in spite of the great Englishman, S. Stephen Harding, might have been crushed out of existence but for the arrival of one of the greatest men of the Middle Age. He came to the monastery with his companions in 1113, at the age of twenty-two, and his name was S. Bernard. Who led him thither

[1] *Cf.* Tuker and Malleson, "Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome," vol iii, pp. 93 *et seq.*

if not the Blessed Virgin herself, to whom he was to give her most beautiful names, the three magnificent vocatives that close the Salve Regina—"O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria"?

S. Bernard came to Citeaux, knocked at the door, and begged for the habit. That habit was white, as especially fitting for those who, like the Cistercians, had dedicated themselves to the Blessed Virgin. S. Bernard came with his thirty companions, of whom five were his own brothers. He remained at Citeaux for three years, and was then sent to found the monastery he called Clairvaux, the Vale of Light, and it is from Clairvaux rather than from Citeaux that the Cistercian Order was to go forth and conquer the world.

"Bernardus valles, colles Benedictus amabat."

And so it is; for as the Black Benedictines found their monasteries on hills as did S. Benedict, for he loved them and as they do still, and Belmont and Downside even to-day in England bear witness to it; so the Cistercians build in the valleys, for S. Bernard loved them, as Tintern and Waverley, Rivaulx, Fountains, and Woburn once bore witness, and as Coalville does even to-day. While S. Bernard lived he ruled the

world; without fear he rebuked Pope and king, but he said "all he had learned of holy Scripture he had learned in woods and in fields mostly by meditation and praying; and confessed that he had none other masters but oaks and holm trees; this confessed he among his friends." In keeping with this his experience is the Rule of his Order, which forbids his monks to settle in cities or towns or near the conversation of men: "In civitatis, castellis, villis, nulla nostra construenda sunt coenobia, sed in locis a conversatione hominum remotis." Tintern then as now must have fulfilled the Rule most perfectly. There is a rumour that a hermitage existed here long previous to the foundation of the monastery, and the very name means, as is supposed, "the house in the oak woods." And the place was a true monastery. We have few records of its history: it was a place apart. Its abbots never thrust themselves into political affairs, they had no seat in Parliament.[1] Their House was not wealthy; it produced no learned or very successful men; it existed for the praise and glory of God. And on the eve of the Suppression we read:—

[1] After 1305. During the eleven years 1294–1305 the Abbot of Tintern was summoned to Parliament.

"Also the abbot of Westmynstere, the hiest of this lande,
The abbot of Tynterne the poorest, ye understande
They ar both abbotes of name, and not lyke of fame to fande,
Yet Tynterne with Westmynster shall nowther sitte ne stande."

Founded, as has been said, by Walter Fitz-Richard de Clare, Lord of Striguil, which we call Chepstow, on 9 May, 1131, in the time of Henry I, from that moment to its suppression it continued occupied only in the service of God. The monks were not English but French whom Walter de Clare placed there. They came from the Abbey of L'Aumône, near Blois, whence came also the monks of Waverley, the first Cistercian House in England. We do not know the name of the first abbot.

Walter Fitz-Richard, the founder, died childless in 1138. He was buried in the Abbey. Eleven years later Gilbert Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, who on Walter Fitz-Richard's death had been granted Striguil, and was the second patron of the Abbey, was also buried here. Part of his tomb is thought to remain in the ruined figure of a knight in armour, still lying in the Abbey ruins.

The first abbot of whom we have record appears in 1182, when he was translated to be

Abbot of Waverley. His successor was that William who was deposed in 1188, when the Abbot of Kingswood was elected in his place. In the following year William Marshall was created Earl of Pembroke by Richard I on his marriage with the great Strongbow's daughter, Isabella. He it was who in 1200 founded in Ireland the Abbey of Tintern Minor in fulfilment of a vow, sending monks from Tintern. His tomb is in the Temple, but Isabella, his wife, lay at Tintern. So the story goes on, till in 1269 we find Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, in possession of Striguil. He it was who then began to rebuild the church. It is William of Worcester who has preserved the names of these benefactors, and it is he who tells us that in October, 1268, the abbot and monks entered the choir of the new church and celebrated the first Mass at the high altar. It is certain that the church was then unfinished.

Tintern pursued its uneventful way till the day of Dissolution, when the greed of Henry VIII prompted him in an hour ever evil for England to seize its revenues and to destroy with it—could he but have seen it—the most glorious Crown in Christendom—the Crown of England. In that appalling cataclysm fell 645 monasteries, 90 colleges, 2,374 chapels, and 110 hospitals.

In the 28th year of that disastrous reign which deprived us of our religion the ruins of Tintern were granted to Henry, second Earl of Worcester, ancestor of the Duke of Beaufort, who till lately continued to hold them. They are now in the possession of the Crown which made them.

I do not suppose that one traveller in a hundred who has looked upon the ruin of Tintern between the Suppression and to-day has regretted or even thought overmuch of the way of life it represents, to which it still bears witness. It was a wise man doubtless who said, "Look not mournfully into the Past: it comes not back again." Yet in fact the Suppression from more than one point of view is the last great turning-point in our history. Perhaps we approach another, but we have not yet reached it. As we look back across the years the catastrophe of the Suppression still towers at the end of the vista. No, the Past comes not back; only the Present is ours, and the Present is full of disillusion. Look at it how you may, to-day we are no longer one; we are disagreed not only on the greatest questions, not only with other nations, but on every question and with one another. There is no longer any unity in the world. Yet for that unity—for the

assurance of that unity and its happiness—I, for one, would willingly sacrifice everything but my nationality. It is wonderful that we Europeans, we of the Empire who till a little over three hundred years ago sucked our life from the same breast, were gathered in the same arms and in everything that mattered in the world were one, should now be so profoundly, so damnably at variance. Some enemy hath done this thing. And what have we gained in exchange for what we have lost? A separate sect for every day in the year; a thousand new and diverting ways of worshipping God. But these set our teeth on edge and put hatred into our hearts and make of every man a murderer. We seem to have gained toleration, but I think we have but to look it squarely in the face to call it by its true name, indifference. In vital things, in the things which seem to us vital and of infinite account we are not tolerant. But we have lost our religion and therefore we are indifferent what ignorant and foolish rites are practised in its name.

Such grievous thoughts as these are thrust upon us by a visit to Tintern. We cannot escape them if we would. The ruins that now litter England are something more than beautiful heaps of stones: they are the murdered body

of our past. They have a meaning for us, and I do not see how anyone can become aware of that meaning, or use it aright, without a bitter regret, a kind of shame.

That shame but increases when we examine Tintern more closely and discover the perfection of its arrangement, the nobility of its plan, its perfect fitness for the purpose it fulfilled for so long.

Mr. Harold Brakespear, F.S.A., who excavated Waverley, the first of the Cistercian Houses in England, is convinced that the first church at Tintern stood in a different position from the ruin we see to-day. It was smaller, to begin with, and the present spoiled church was built around it to the south and east by Roger Bigod in such a manner that the choir at the back of the old church served until the new church was so far finished as to be capable of use. For it is part of the Benedictine traditions, and more especially of that of Cluny, out of which the Cistercians came, that the Divine Office should never be interrupted. Even to-day that tradition, a part of the Rule indeed, is observed ; and in the late Suppression in France when the greater number of monks from a Benedictine monastery—from Solesmes, for instance—had departed into exile, a few were

always left to say the Office in the old place until the majority were able to take up the great service of prayer and praise in the new. "Divinum auxilium maneat semper nobiscum" the Office ends, and in the Monastic Breviary we find another answer than Amen. For the monkish Office here replies, "Et cum fratribus nostris absentibus. Amen." We can imagine at the time of the Suppression in England as in France with what a dramatic and pitiful effect this Responsary so troubled for once echoed softly through the empty choir in the lonely voice of some old man who had lived too long for his peace.

Tintern, which received the sorrowful and cruel tidings three hundred and more years ago, remains to-day intact save that the roof is gone altogether and the north wall of the nave has been destroyed. Apart from this destruction we have a complete shell of a Cistercian church, consisting of a choir and sanctuary with aisles, north and south transept, and a nave with its aisles: a complete cruciform building, not very large, small, indeed, in comparison with Glastonbury or Westminster, Black Benedictine Houses, measuring, in fact, some 228 feet in length by 152 across the transepts, with a nave and aisles of some 75 feet in breadth.

Looking up the church from the western doors, what will first strike the traveller, I suppose, is the greatness of the eastern window. It seems too large now perhaps, broken and empty as it is, but when it had its tracery, as the west window still has, and was filled with clear glass blazoned with the arms of Roger Bigod—for the Cistercians did not use coloured glass as a rule and had no "storied glass" at all, their vow of poverty insisting upon only the simplest materials—it must have been one of the finest windows in England. For the same reason the Cistercian churches were without great towers, had no richness of pavements or pictures or carvings, for these were inconsistent with poverty.

Before the great eastern window, but well within the church, on a line, it has been thought, with the first or easternmost piers, stood the high altar, with two chapels behind it, separated from it by a retro-choir or processional path. Before the high altar was the choir of four bays, separated from the aisles by a wall, as we may see at Westminster to-day. These aisles also ended in chapels.

The Transepts were simple, and had three eastern chapels each.

The Nave of six bays, divided from the aisles

like the choir by a wall save at the two western bays on the north side, was simple, and the whole church was full of light, the two great windows, apart from the rest even, assuring this.

The Choir, as we see, stretched, as it still does at Westminster, west of the transepts, and was screened, again as at Westminster. To the west of this screen stood two altars, under the Rood.

The Cloister, of course to the south of the church, was small, and around it stood the monastic buildings: to the west, the little Cloister of the *conversi*, or lay brothers; beside it, southward, the Dormitory of the lay brothers; and under this a parlour and a cellar. To the south of the main Cloister was the kitchen, and beside it the monks' Refectory, with pantry and warming-house. Then in the south-east corner the monks' Dormitory, with over it the Novices' Lodging. To the east of the main Cloister was the Chapter House, and then the Library against the north transept of the church. A little way off, to the south-east of the church, was the Infirmary in its garden.

Such was the church and monastery of Tintern. It stood there as a witness of the immanence of God, an outpost of the spiritual world for all who passed by to see, to render them aid and comfort in their trouble, to refresh them with food and

music, to lift up their hearts with the incomparable Latin Offices, and to give them rest when they were weary. Yet it stood there not only or even chiefly in the service of man, but in the service of God. When the last abbot, Richard Wyche, was expelled and the monastery suppressed, there were but thirteen monks in the place; it was one of the lesser monasteries, and I do not suppose at any time there can have been many more than this. How far must these men's minds have been from ours, if they could build such a place in this lonely valley, far from any town or village, for a congregation of thirteen! To-day we build numberless churches as cheaply as possible, and in considering their size and splendour we first demand to know what congregation they are "to accommodate." In the old days we thought first of the glory of God. Westminster Abbey, the greatest and most beautiful building in England and the world, a vast double church capable of holding many thousands, was built for a congregation of some sixty monks. It was never at any time at the service of the public, or even open to them. They were admitted on occasion to the last two bays of the nave; and the bays of Westminster are small. There they could neither see nor take part in any service at the high altar. Between them and it stretched not

only a great screen such as we have to-day, but another also on which was the Rood, and under which was an altar for their occasional use. They had no part or lot in Westminster Abbey. Their church was S. Margaret's, built for them, and they worshipped there.

Such an idea as these churches stand for is repugnant to us to-day, because we have become so sentimental about Man and his "rights" as to have forgotten his duties, and the worship of God no longer attracts us. We have filled the Abbey with grotesque statues and grotesque corpses. Darwin sleeps there cheek by jowl with the last abbot, and we have erected—God knows why—a bust to Longfellow, on which American visitors piously leave cards. The place has lost all meaning, and is inexplicable as a building in its modern service. The triforium is useless and unused, the screens also, the chapels, and the desecrated and desolate shrine. Still Westminster remains and may one day come to a pallid resurrection. Tintern is dead, murdered like Glastonbury and many hundred other shrines that we built for the love of God, for our own joy and His delight. It is a crime we look on as we stand in the nave of Tintern—a crime that nothing can ever wipe out. I, for one, should be ready to demand of any honest man who stands there

whether he really thinks all that has happened since—the modern world and the modern rabble —were worth it. I should be content to abide his answer.

XVI

CHEPSTOW AND THE SEVERN

EVER since we left Ross, but more especially about Redbrook, we have been passing along the western edge of the famous Forest of Dean, the "Queen of forests," as Michael Drayton says in his "Polyolbion":—

> "Queen of forests all that west of Severn lie,
> Her broad and bushy top Dean holdeth up so high,
> The lesser are not seen, she is so tall and large."

But what is a forest? It was not what we call a forest to-day—that is to say, a large tract of country covered with trees and underwood. A Forest as late certainly as Tudor times, and to-day, too, on Exmoor and Dartmoor, was a large territory of waste land, including heath, pasture, and woodland within certain defined bounds, but unenclosed, within which the Crown alone had the right of hunting, and which was administered by a special law having local as well as central administration. A Forest differed from

a Chase in this only, that a chase could be held by a subject and was, as a rule, subject to the Common Law. A Park, on the other hand, differed from a forest in that it was enclosed—a forest might include a park, as Exmoor Forest does to-day—it might be held by a subject, and was subject to the Common Law, the only exceptions being such parks as were within forests, for there the Forest Law obtained. A Warren was an unenclosed space of waste land where the public had the right of hunting, and in fact this was its only difference from a forest.

The Forest of Dean, then, was one of these vast unenclosed tracts of "waste" land, including upland and lowland, heath, pasture, and woodland, in which the king alone had the right of hunting, and which was administered by Forest Law. It got its name from Dean, the town or market within the Forest. The keepership was generally in the hands of the custodian of the Castle of S. Briavel, close to the Wye, and the Abbey of Gloucester had certain tithes of venison, and later of boar, by grants of Henry I and Henry III, the Abbey of Flaxley having the right by a grant of Henry II to two forges for smelting iron. The days of the Forest were, however, numbered by the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Many

Forest privileges as well as monastic properties here were then granted to a certain Kingston, a rapacious person, and in 1638 a sale of all woods, manors, quarries, and so forth, within the Forest was made by the Crown to Sir John Wintour. The Forest of Dean now is therefore but a name.

On leaving Tintern by boat for Chepstow, not much of real interest will be seen; but if the traveller before finally leaving Tintern, where, by the way, there is a delectable inn, will climb the Wyndcliff, the whole of this last reach of his journey will appear before him. The usual ascent of this vast limestone cliff, some 900 feet in height, is made from Chepstow by S. Arvan, but we shall proceed from Tintern under Penterry Church, by Porthgaseg, and so slowly to the summit. Thence the prospect is of an astonishing extent. Across the luxuriant woods and romantic rocks through the pleasant valley we see Wye passing on its winding way about Lancaut, with its little church, its farm, its green pastures and cornfields under the Banygor Crags, to Piercefield, with its Twelve Apostles, and beyond the noble ruins of Chepstow Castle, the great iron bridge, the Tutshill Rocks, and so to Severn Sea, with the Castle of Berkeley on its beach. Further to the right

rises Thornbury Church steeple, the islands of the Flat and Steep Holmes, the headlands of Brean Down on the English shore, of Penarth on the Welsh, the hills of Somerset, Gloucester, Devon, Wilts, Glamorgan, Brecon, Hereford, and Worcester.

So much for the Wyndcliff, which offers certainly the finest prospect in all our way.

Nothing of all this fine view is, of course, to be had from the river. In truth, the way is dreary enough, the mudbanks of the tidal river spoiling even the finest reaches. Nevertheless, you see the Wyndcliff and the Twelve Apostles from below, and that is no mean sight.

But no one who has ever left Tintern by water is, I suppose, sorry to see Chepstow Castle come into sight at last; for though it mark the journey's end it is a noble ending and a fitting tailpiece to Tintern Abbey. Coxe, the historian of Monmouthshire, describes that journey so well that I append what he says of it for the reader's pleasure:—

"From Tintern the Wye assumes the character of a tide river; the water is no longer transparent, and, except at high tide, the banks are covered with slime; to enjoy, therefore, the full beauty of this part of the navigation the traveller should seize the moment

in which it begins to ebb, when the height and fullness of the river, aided by the picturesque scenery, compensates for the discoloured appearance of the stream.

"The impressions of pleasing melancholy which I received from contemplating the venerable ruins of Tintern were increased by the deep solitude and romantic grandeur of the woods and rocks overhanging the river, and heightened by the gloom of a clouded atmosphere.

"Hitherto the Wye did not pursue so serpentine a course or present such naked and stupendous cliffs as during yesterday's navigation; but in the vicinity of Piercefield the sinuosities reappear, and the rocks do not yield in majestic ruggedness to those of Coldwell or the New Weir. The long line of Banygor crags forms a perpendicular rampart on the left bank, wholly bare except where a few shrubs spring from the crevices or fringe their summits; on the opposite side, the river is skirted by narrow slips of rich pasture rising into wooded acclivities, on which towers the Wyndcliff, a perpendicular mass of rock, overhung with thickets.

"At this place the Wye turns abruptly round the fertile peninsula of Lancant, under the stupendous amphitheatre of Piercefield cliffs, starting from the edge of the water; here wholly

mantled with wood, there jutting in bold and fantastic prejections which appear like enormous buttresses formed by the hand of Nature. Some of these projections are called the Twelve Apostles and another St. Peter's Thumb. At the further extremity of this peninsula the river again turns and stretches in a long reach between the white and towering cliffs of Lancant and the rock acclivities of the Piercefield woods. In the midst of these grand and picturesque scenes the embattled turrets of Chepstow Castle burst upon our sight; and as we glided under the perpendicular crag, we looked up with astonishment to the massive walls impending over the edge of the precipice, and appearing like a continuation of the rock itself; before stretched the long and picturesque bridge [now, alas! replaced by a monstrosity of the most modern sort], and the view was closed by a semicircular range of red cliffs, tinted with pendant foliage, which form the left bank of the river."

The story of Chepstow, or even of Chepstow Castle, would, I suppose, fill a book, and indeed has done so; for in 1883 a large work in quarto, running to some 270 pages was printed for John Fitchett Marsh—deceased—by William Pollard, of Exeter. To this storehouse of knowledge, then, I would refer the curious reader.

Here we can but glance at that story and away. For Chepstow is the last town on our journey, a pleasant town with a great church as well as a great castle to recommend it to us, but the last town on our journey for all that, and, with all England in sight over the sea, not likely to detain us longer than we can help.

It is set on the slope of a hill, amid a fine enough scene of rocks and woods and ruin and gold to satisfy any of us; and though we enter it from the river, as it were by the back door, just as we did Monmouth, it can bear even that sorry introduction.

Of any possible Roman encampment or town in this place we shall leave Mr. Ormerod to speak in his "Strigulensia," or Mr. Haverfield in the forthcoming Victoria County History of Monmouthshire. Here we shall but mention the Saxon town of Cheapanstow, or place of traffic, which was possibly occupied by Harold when he took possession of this part of the border and built, it is said, a palace at Portscuitt, three miles away. Chepstow's real importance begins with the Normans, and especially with the advent of that very potent lord, William Fitzosbern, Earl of Hereford, of whom we have had to say so much already. "The towne of Chepstow," says Leland, "hath been very strongly walled, as

yet welle doth appere. The walles began at the great bridge over the Wye, and so cam to the castel, the which yet standeth fayr and strong, not far from the ruin of the bridge. A great lyklyhood ys that when Cargwent began to decay, then began Chepstow to flourish. For yt standeth far better as upon Wye, there ebbing and flowing by the Rage coming out of Severn, so that to Chepstow may cum greate sheppes."

This castle, the head and front of the walled town of Chepstow, was built, as recorded in Domesday Book, by William Fitzosbern, Earl of Hereford and of the Isle of Wight, Count of Breteuil, Pascie, and Ivry. It was called the Castle of Striguil, and still remains in ruins. William Fitzosbern, as we know, left three sons, and it was the third, Roger, who succeeded to the Earldom of Hereford and to the Castle of Chepstow, for the eldest succeeded to his Norman lands, and the second, Ralph, was a monk. Roger rebelled against the Crown and lost his lands. This Roger, like his father, was a tremendous person. Dugdale tells a tale of him in prison: "Though he frequently used many scornful and contumelious expressions towards the king, yet he [the king] was pleased at the celebration of the feast of Easter in a solemn manner (as was then usual) to send to this Earl

Roger, at that time in prison, his royal robes, who so disdained the favour that he forthwith caused a great fire to be made and the mantle, the inner surcoat of silk, and the upper garment lined with precious furs, to be suddenly burnt, which being made known to the king he became not a little displeased and said, 'Certainly he is a very proud man who hath thus abused me; but, by the brightness of God, he shall never come out of prison so long as I live.' Which expression was fulfilled to the utmost, for he never was released during the king's life nor after, but died in prison."

Well, Roger lost his estates, the Castel of Striguil among them, which was given by the Crown to the great family of Clare, of which we find Gilbert Strongbow in possession in the time of Henry I. He was Marshal of England at the Coronation of Henry II, and became Earl of Pembroke. He was succeeded by his son, Richard de Clare, also called Strongbow, and of this man Giraldus has left us a wonderful portrait. "This Earle," says he, "was somewhat ruddie and of sanguine complexion and freckle face, his eyes grey, his face feminine, his voice small, and his neck little but somewhat of a high stature: he was very liberal, courteous and gentle; what he could not compass or bring to pass in deed he

would win by good words and gentle speeches. In time of peace he was more ready to yield and obey than to rule and bear sway. Out of camp he was more like to a soldier companion than a captain or ruler ; but in the camp and in the wars he carried with him the state and countenance of a valiant captain. Of himself he would not adventure anything ; but being advised and set on he refused no attempts ; for himself he would not rashly adventure or presumptuously take anything in hand. In the fight and battle he was a most assured token and sign to the whole company, either to stand valiant to the fight or for policy to retire. In all chances of war he was still one and the same manner of man, being neither dismayed with adversity nor puffed up with prosperity." He died in 1176, without male issue, and his daughter Isabella, as we have seen, took all his lordship, including the Castle of Striguil, to William Marshall, created Earl of Pembroke, in right of his wife, and Lord Protector of the kingdom on the accession of Henry III. "He was," as Matthew Paris tells us, "a severe tamer of the Irish, a great favourer of the English, achieved much in Normandy, and was an invincible soldier in France." He had ten children, five sons and five daughters. The sons all died, and his vast domains were divided

among his daughters. Hugh Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, married the eldest, Maud, who lies at Tintern, and so became lord of Striguil. He died in 1225, and his widow at last obtained "the office and honour of marshal." Henry III himself "solemnly gave the marshal's rod into her hands, which she thereupon delivered unto Earl Roger, her son." Her grandson, Roger, surrendered all the estates to Edward I, who re-granted them to him and his issue by Alice, his wife. He died without issue, and Edward II granted to Thomas Plantagenet, his brother, all the Bigod estates, including the Castle of Striguil. We now come to a time of some confusion. Thomas Plantagenet had no sons, but he had two daughters, Margaret and Alice. Margaret married Sir Walter Mannz, inherited Striguil, and was afterwards created Duchess of Norfolk. She had two daughters, of whom the elder, Elizabeth, married John de Mowbray, and the Castle of Striguil and the town of Chepstow came into the possession of Elizabeth's son, Thomas de Mowbray. He was created in right of his grandmother Earl Marshal of England and Duke of Norfolk, and was banished and died in exile, as Shakespeare has told us, in 1379. His elder son, Thomas, was beheaded in 1405, but his younger son, John, was created in his father's lifetime Earl of Surrey,

and on his father's death became Duke of Norfolk and Earl Marshal. He died in 1434, possessed of the "castle and manor and borough of Striguil, which were assigned to his wife, Catherine, daughter of Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, as part of her dowry." His son succeeded him and sold the castle, manor, and lordship of Chepstow to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. As Churchyard says in his "Worthiness of Wales":—

"To Chepstowe yet, my pen agayne must passe,
Where Strongbow once (an earle of rare renowne)
A long time since the lord and maister was
(In princely sort) of castle and of towne.
Then after that to Mowbray it befell,
Of Norfolke Duke, a worthie knowne full well;
Who sold the same to William Herbert, Knight,
That was the Earle of Pembroke then by right."

Herbert's son William, afterwards Earl of Huntingdon, got them, and his daughter and heiress, Elizabeth, brought them to her husband, Sir Charles Somerset, who was summoned to Parliament, *jure uxoris*, by the title of Lord Herbert of Raglan, Chepstow, and Gower, and afterwards became Earl of Worcester.

So we come to the Civil War, in which Chepstow played its part. It was held for the king till, in 1645, Colonel Morgan, Governor of Gloucester, with 300 horse and 400 foot, took it. Then came

Sir Nicholas Kemeys in the cause of his king and took it back. This brought Cromwell against it in person, but he had no success, though but 160 men held it against him. Then Colonel Ewer, one of his officers, sat down before it and starved the garrison out. Yet they would not surrender. One night a Parliament soldier swam the river with a knife in his teeth and cut the cable of a boat by which the garrison thought to have escaped. The castle was forced, and gallant Sir Nicholas with forty of his brave garrison were slain. This victory was thought so important that Parliament rewarded the man who brought the news with fifty pounds. Colonel Ewer and his officers and men, however, only got a letter of thanks.

The Earl of Worcester got back his castle when Charles II got his throne, and it was purchased from the Beaufort family by the Crown. What the castle is now we may all see. It may be interesting, however, to have a description of it as it was a hundred years ago. "The castle is situated," says Coxe, "on the brow of a precipice overhanging the right bank of the Wye; the northern side is advanced close to the edge, and constructed in such a manner as to appear a part of the cliff; the same ivy which overspreads the walls twines and clusters

round the huge fragments and down the perpendicular side of the rock. The remaining parts of the castle were defended by a moat, and consist of massive walls flanked with lofty towers.

"The area occupies a large tract of land and is divided into four courts. The grand entrance to the east is a circular arch between two round towers, formerly strengthened by a portcullis, and exhibits a venerable specimen of Norman architecture; it leads into the first court, which contains the shells of the ground kitchens, and numerous apartments of considerable size still retaining vestiges of baronial splendour. A few of these rooms, which are less dilapidated than the rest, are tenanted by the family to whom the castle was leased. At the south-eastern angle of this court is a round tower, now called Harry Marten's Tower, for here the regicide, Sir Henry Marten, was imprisoned in the time of Charles I for twenty years. This was the keep or citadel. The inside front, which has a Gothic entrance with hanging arches and square windows, is posterior to the original structure; the outside is massive, appears in its ancient state, and bears striking marks of its Norman origin.

"On the western side of this court, near a round tower called the Old Kitchen, a gate opens into

the second court, now a garden, at the extremity of which another gateway leads into the third court and to a neat and elegant building usually called the chapel. The walls of this edifice are partly formed with hewn stone and partly with rubble, which is covered with a hard cement of pebbles and mortar. Some Roman bricks interspersed in the western and northern sides have induced antiquaries to suppose it of Roman workmanship and to distinguish it by the name of the Roman wall; but these bricks are too few in number to support this opinion, and the whole building appears to consist of heterogeneous materials collected from the remains of dilapidated structures. The inside is a grand area ninety feet in length and thirty in breadth; the roof is fallen, and the remaining walls are not less than forty feet high. It is usually supposed to have formed one magnificent room, but a range of apertures for beams in the side walls, about thirteen feet from the ground, seem to prove that it was divided into an upper and lower apartment, unless they were intended to support a gallery.

At the height of eighteen feet appears a row of rounded arches, each nearly ten feet high and eight broad, supposed to have been niches containing either statues of the twelve apostles, or

seats for the twelve knights of Glamorgan when they paid their first homage to Robert Fitzhamon for the lands which they conquered under his banners. The number of these supposed niches, however, does not justify this conjecture; for I counted no less than fifteen, and they appear to have been nothing more than arches, formed for the purpose of lightening the walls, which were unprovided with buttresses. All these except two are filled up and appear to have been stuccoed; two of them are almost covered with part of the Gothic arch that supported the roof.

"The present entrance at the north probably led to a vaulted chamber beneath, but the grand entrance was by a flight of steps, still visible on the outside of the eastern wall, through a semi-circular arched doorway, now closed, in the upper part of which appears a Roman brick and two stones, ornamented with Saxon mouldings, plainly taken from the remains of more ancient structures. Within this entrance, a staircase in the wall ascends to a door, on a level with the range of arches which opened into the upper chamber or gallery, and from thence to the battlements.

"The original character of this building is Saxon or Norman, yet the decorations are Gothic; the windows are mostly in the orna-

mental style of that species of architecture, and the remains of an elegant arch, enriched with foliage and trigliphs, which supported the roof, spring from the walls. These vestiges of Gothic splendour prove considerable alterations in the building posterior to its original construction.

"At the south-western angle of the third court is a staircase, ascending to the battlements and towers; this court is likewise a garden, and formerly communicated by a drawbridge with the fourth or last court, which now can only be entered by creeping through a sally port in the south wall. The western entrance of the castle was strengthened with three portcullises and a drawbridge, leading into a field still called the Castle Ditch, which is enclosed by the wall of the town; and beyond is another meadow, denominated the Castle Garden.

"From a general view of these remains the grand character of the castle appears to be Norman; the shell was constructed on one plan and at the same era, but alterations and additions were made by the different proprietors. The range of buildings on the northern side of the first court are wholly constructed in the ornamented Gothic style of architecture, and are evidently more modern than the rest of the castle."

Willis in his "History of Abbies" tells us "There was an alien priory of Benedictine monks at Chepstow, called in the Norman era the Monastery of Strigule; it was founded by one of the proprietors of the castle soon after the Conquest, and was a cell to the Abbey of Cormeille in Normandy. It was dedicated to S. Mary, and King Edward IV granted it to the college of God's House in Cambridge, but that grant seems not to have taken effect, because there was a priory till the Dissolution, when it had three religious, and was valued at £32 a year."

Nothing seems to be left of the Priory, but the present magnificent parish church is said to have been in part the chapel of the monks; in fact, the parish church was the nave of the chapel. However that may be, it is a splendid Norman building, the western front, especially the porch, being indeed a very beautiful piece of work. The original tower, which stood to the east of the church, fell down in the early years of the eighteenth century, according to Coxe.

On the south side of the chancel is a tomb, painted and gilt, with a canopy supported by eight Corinthian columns. Here lies Henry, second Earl of Worcester, Lord Herbert of

Chepstow, and his wife Elizabeth. Of him Dugdale says: "He in 12 H. 8 (his father then living), bearing the title of Lord Herbert, upon that famous interview betwixt Ardres and Guisnes, by King Henry and Francis I of France, where all feats of arms were exercised for the space of forty days on horse and foot, was one of the challengers on the part of the English. And in 15 H. 8 accompanied the Duke of Suffolk into France, at which time divers castles and strong places were by him won. In which service he merited so well, as that he had the honour of knighthood conferred on him by that duke. And in 17 H. 8 (shortly after his father's death) was appointed one of the commissioners for concluding a peace with the French. In 18 H. 8 he had a special livery of all the lands which either by the death of his father or Elizabeth (daughter and heir to William, Earl of Huntington) did by inheritance descend to him. In 22 H. 8 he was one of the peers who subscribed that declaration, then sent to Pope Clement VII intimating to him that the loss of his supremacy here would be endangered, in case he did not comply with King Henry in that business of his divorce from Queen Catherine. And in 5 E. 6 accompanied the Marquess of Northampton into France, who being then sent ambassador to that

king presented him with the order of the garter." He died in 1549.

In the chancel is the grave of Harry Marten, the regicide, but his body lies in the body of the church, some old vicar having found it unfitting that so preposterous a murderer should lie in the sanctuary. Unfortunate Marten! Like many another since he mixed up liberty with murder. His epitaph, which he wrote himself, in spite of his enormous crime, should touch us: "Here, September the 9th in the year of our Lord 1680 Was buried a true Englishman Who in Berkshiere was well knowne To love his countrys Freedom 'bove his owne But liveing immured full twenty year Had time to writ as doth appear. His epitaph:

"*H*ere or elsewhere (all's one to you and me),
*E*arth, air, or water gripes my ghostless dust,
*N*one knows how soon to be by fire sett free.
*R*eader, if you an oft-tryed rule will trust,
*Y*ou'll gladly do and suffer what you must.

*M*y life was spent with serving you, and you,
*A*nd death's my pay (it seems) and welcome too;
*R*evenge destroying but itself, while I
*T*o birds of prey leave my old cage, and fly.
*E*xamples preach to th' eye, care then (mine says)
*N*ot how you end, but how you spend your dayes."

With Henry Marten's lines we take leave of

Chepstow and of our valley. The way to the great river which shall swallow Wye, which is its grave and gateway to the sea, is but a little open way. Past Tallard's Marsh, and Hardwick Cliff, and Ewen Rock, and Chapel Rock, under the Redcliff, is but a few miles. There she slides with all her beauty into eternity, and all forgotten leaves us to wonder on the brink.

INDEX

ABEREDW, 82–87
Afon Tarenig, 35
Alltmawr, 87
Ash Weir, 254

BALLINGHAM HILL, 201
Belmont, 178
Benedictines, the, 178–181
Bidno, the, 35
Bigsweir, 253
Birmingham, 23
Black Mountains, 89
Boating on the Wye, 185–191, 252–254
Borrow quoted, 30–31
Boughrood, 88
Brampton Abbots, 202–203
Bredwardine Castle, 126–130
Brock Weir, 254
Brynwern Bridge, 69
Builth, 69–81

CARADOC COURT, 201
Celtic temperament, 4
Chepstow, 275–290
Chiltern Hills, 21
Cistercians, the, 255–258
Clâsbury, 90–91
Clifford Castle, 116–120
Clyro, 92
Coed Ithol, 254
Coldwell Rocks, 236–237
Courtfield, 232
Credenhill, 135
Cusop, 98

DEE, the, 3, 9
Dinedor Hill, 192
Doldowlod Woods, 67

EARDISLEY, 122
Edgehill, 23
Edward I and Wales, 15
Eisteddfa-Curig, 30, 32–33
England, Old and New, 15–18
Erwood, 87–88

FAIRE ROSAMUND, 117
Fawley, 201
Forest of Dean, 270–272
Fownhope, 200
Foy, 202

GLASCUM, 53
Glendower, Owen, 113
Goodrich Castle, 222–230

HAMPTON, BISHOP, 197
Harold and Wales, 10
Hay, the, 92–98
Henry V, 233, 240-243, 246
Hereford, 137–155
  Benedictines in, 178–181
  Cathedral of, 156–184
    Architecture of, 174, 177
    To-day, 171–174
Herefordshire, story of, 99–115
Hoarwithy, 201
Holme Lacy, 198–200
How Caple, 201

KENCHESTER, 133
Kerne Bridge, 232
Kilpeck Church, 177
Kinnersley, 123–126

LELAND quoted, 94, 134–135, 138–141

Letton, 126
Llanavan, 67
Llandeilo Graban, 87
Llandogo, 254
Llanelwedd, 81
Llangurig, 29, 35–42
Llanidloes, 19, 26, 27, 29
Llaniwared, 43
Llanwrthwl, 66
Llewelyn ap Gruffyd, 78–80, 85–86, 110
Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, 56
Llyn Weir, 254
Llysdinam, 67
Llyswen, 89
Lower Benches, 253
Lower Bullingham, 181–184

MARTEG, the, 49
Maude de S. Valery, 91
Moat Lane, 25
Moccas Castle, 131–132
Monmouth, 238–251
  Caps, 241–242
Monnington, 130–131
Mordiford, 192–127
Mouse Castle, 98

NEWBRIDGE, 67
New Weir, 235, 253

OFFA, 9
Offa's Dyke, 10, 25, 132–133, 239
Oldcastle, Sir John, 113
Oxford, 22

PLYNLIMON, 31–32, 43
Preston-on-Wye, 132

READING, 4
Redbrook, 253
Rhayader, 49, 50–64
  Birmingham Dams, 62–64
Rheidol, the, 30
Rhys ap Gruffyd, 52–53
Rome in Wales, 6–9
Ross, 204–215
  The Man of, 211–213
  View from the Prospect, 215

S. CURIG, 33–34
S. Murthwl, 66
S. Thomas Cantelupe, 135–136, 161–168
Sellack, 201
Severn, 3, 9, 27, 29, 20
Shelley at Cwm Elan, 61–62
Shrewsbury, 24–25
Siluria, 44–49
Staunton, 130
Symonds Yat, 235–237

THAMES GAP, 21
Three Cocks, 89–90
Tintern Abbey, 254–269
  Architecture of, 263–266
  To-day, 261–263, 266–269
Tintern to Chepstow, 273–275
Tour of the Wye, 216–217
Twelve Apostles, 274

UPPER BENCHES, 253

VAUGHAN, CARDINAL, 232

WALES, boundary of, 2–3
  Political, geography of, 1–18
Walford, 230–231
Wallingford, 22
Warwick, 23
Welsh Bicknor, 233–235
Welsh character, the, 26, 48
Welshpool, 25
Whitebrook, 253
Whitecross, 135
Whitney, 120–122
Willersley, 122
William I and Wales, 11–14
Wilton Castle, 217–222
Windsor, 20–21
Winforton, 121–122
Wye, passage of an invasion, 10
  Source of, 30–32
  Valley of, 15–18
  Routes to, 19–20
Wyndcliff, 272–273

YSTWYTH VALLEY, 35

UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS, WOKING AND LONDON.